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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 82

THE ANABAPTIST VIEW OF THE STATE 83
Hans J. Hillerbrand

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO THE RADICAL CONTINENTAL REFORMATION 111
James Leo Garrett

THE TURNING POINT IN THE ZWINGLIAN REFORMATION 128
John Howard Yoder

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN THE POLITICAL SITUATION 141
Elmer Neufeld

BOOK REVIEWS 163

Gustav E. Reimer and G. R. Gaeddert, *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874*
Reviewed by Guy F. Hershberger

Proceedings of the Eleventh Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems
Reviewed by Melvin Gingerich

EDITORIAL

IN THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN ANABAPTIST RESEARCH IN RECENT YEAR INTEREST is turning more and more to Anabaptist theology and ethics. This is as it should be, for here is a large field of study that is of first importance. To be sure, the general bases of Anabaptist theology have been laid bare, but a greatly intensified study of its various aspects is a prime need. The discovery of new sources, both printed and unprinted, has greatly enlarged the base for these studies, but even the older and well-known source materials have not yet been adequately exploited. A series of significant topical theological studies is now being carried on by younger scholars, many of them in the form of doctoral dissertations, which are most promising.

The core result of one of these studies is presented in this issue by Hans Hillerbrand (Ph.D., Erlangen, 1958) under the title, "The Anabaptist View of the State." For the first time an adequate and comprehensive presentation of this major Anabaptist doctrine is thereby made available. It is in the best tradition of thorough scholarship, based on an exhaustive study of the sources, with extensive actual quotations from them. It is completely convincing. Publication of the full dissertation is to take place during 1958 in the original German form.

THE SECOND IMPORTANT ARTICLE ON ANABAPTIST THEOLOGY IN THIS ISSUE IS "The Nature of the Church According to the Radical Continental Reformation" by James Leo Garrett. As the author points out, the previous major study on the *Anabaptist View of the Church* by Littell is primarily an interpretation of Anabaptism from the point of view of its doctrine of the church, whereas the present article by Professor Garrett is an attempt to develop more fully the exposition of the doctrine itself. It is a thorough study, though not claiming finality, and one which sets the Anabaptist view in its proper perspective. The demarcation of the distinct types of church concept within the Anabaptist general group and in groups near to the Anabaptists (mainline Anabaptists, Hutterites, Münsterites, Spiritualist-Schwenkfelders) is distinctly helpful.

THE RISE OF ANABAPTISM IN ZURICH WAS DIRECTLY DUE TO THE BASIC DISAGREEMENT between Zwingli and the small group of his followers and associates led by Conrad Grebel, over the question of the relation of church and state. The uncovering of this disagreement with the consequent necessity for a decision by Zwingli about his own course of action in the matter marks not only the turning point for the Grebel group (the later Anabaptists) but for the Zwinglian Reformation itself. The precise definition of the disagreement and the dating of it are therefore matters of prime interest to both Reformed and Anabaptist historians. John Howard Yoder's careful, thorough, and acute study of this problem is reported in this issue. His conclusion, dating the break in December 1523 rather than October 23, 1523, as Blanke and Bender had done, and giving a different rationale of the event, appears convincing.

THE HISTORIC ANABAPTIST-MENNONITE POSITION OF REJECTION OF DIRECT OPERATIONAL political responsibility has been challenged from the very beginning by opponents and critics as a position of irresponsibility which an earnest Christian cannot take. It has also frequently been questioned by voices within the tradition, and abandoned in whole or in part by some considerable national and denominational Mennonite groups, especially in Europe, though maintained by most American Mennonites. Currently, as a serious re-examination of several central Anabaptist-Mennonite positions is being carried on by earnest thinkers and leaders within the tradition, the problem of "Christian Responsibility in the Political Situation" is receiving a fresh review. A major contribution to this review is the paper read by Elmer Neufeld at the recent Chicago Conference on

(Continued on page 110)

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

THE ANABAPTIST VIEW OF THE STATE

HANS J. HILLERBRAND*

The problem of the proper relationship of the true Christian to the state has been concurrent to 19 centuries of the history of the Christian church. The New Testament view has recently become the subject of detailed analysis.[1] The early church was deeply concerned about the problem, as the thorough studies of Harnack and Cadoux have shown.[2] Even the Christian church of the Middle Ages, though committed by the Constantinian solutions to a new position, was not completely devoid of an awareness of the tensions that exist in a Christian's relation to the social world. The subsequent re-evaluation and gradual dissolution of the *Corpus Christianum* concept, which we customarily associate with the Reformation and the coming of the modern time, has again given prominence to this problem, which unfortunately has not resulted in a uniform and commonly accepted position within Christendom.

Recent research in the Reformation has shown that Anabaptism —frequently accused by the Reformers of civil disobedience and rebellion[3]—held a unique position which deserves careful study and analysis. The varied attempts in recent scholarship to focus attention on certain aspects of the Anabaptist view of the state have hardly

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1 In my doctoral dissertation, *Die politische Ethik des Oberdeutschen Täufertums* (Erlangen, 1957), I have attempted a full analysis of the Anabaptist position. The present paper is a summary of the dissertation.

1a Oscar Cullman, *The State in the New Testament* (New York, 1956).

2 Adolf Harnack, *Militia Christi* (Tübingen, 1905); C. Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War* (London, 1919).

3 Bullinger seems to be a good illustration here; cf. Heinrich Bullinger, *Der Widertöuffern ursprung, fürgang, Secten, wäsen* . . . (Zürich, 1561). For a modern scholarly appraisal, see Harold S. Bender, "Thomas Müntzer, the Zwickau Prophets, and the Anabaptists," *MQR* XXVII (1953), and Heinold Fast, *Bullinger und die Täufer* (unpublished dissertation, Heidelberg, 1957).

gone beyond a mere statement of the Anabaptist position or the consideration of underlying principles. While some of these studies have followed modern scholarship in their identification of evangelical Anabaptism as a distinct branch of the "left wing,"[4] there have been others who included the Anabaptist view of the state in a discussion of the entire "left wing," making it therefore—though seemingly externally different—an integral part of the common position of the *Schwärmer*.[5] In spite of these many partial studies, a thorough analysis has remained a desideratum.[6]

THE NATURE OF THE STATE

All Anabaptist discussions on the nature of the state commence with the significant affirmation that the office of government is ordained by God. This simple statement bears consequences for the general characterization of the Anabaptist view of the state, as it clearly establishes the fact that the Anabaptists held a position very similar to that of the Reformers in regard to the origin of governmental authority. All Anabaptist writers who deal with this issue recognize this divine ordination and are emphatic in their affirmation of it.

Ambrosius Spittelmeier, a South German Anabaptist, confesses that "every government that has existed since the time of Adam and exists today has been instituted by God,"[7] and Hans Umlauft, another Anabaptist, prays for "all at whose side God has hung the sword."[8]

4 Robert Kreider, *The Swiss Anabaptists and the State* (unpublished dissertation, Chicago, 1952); Samuel Geiser, *Die Taufgesinnten-Gemeinden* (Karlsruhe, 1931); Leonhard von Muralt, *Glaube und Lehre der schweizerischen Wiedertäufer in der Reformationszeit* (Zürich, 1938); Emil Händiges, *Die Lehre der Mennoniten in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Ludwigshafen, 1921); John Horsch, *Mennonites in Europe* (Scottdale, 1940); W. Mannhardt, *Die Wehrfreiheit der Altpreussischen Mennoniten* (Marienburg, 1863); Robert Kreider, "The Anabaptist View of the State," in *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottdale, 1957).

5 Ulrich Bergfried, *Verantwortung als theologisches Problem im Täufertum des 16. Jahrhundert* (dissertation, Tübingen, 1938); Karl Holl, *Luther und die Schwärmer, Gesammelte Aufsätze* I (Tübingen, 1952); Fritz Heyer, *Der Kirchenbegriff der Schwärmer* (Leipzig, 1938).

6 This has been emphasized by Georg Wünsch, *Evangelische Ethik des Politischen* (Tübingen, 1936) 204, and Heinrich Zwicker, *Gottesreich und Weltreich* (St. Gallen, 1942).

7 Karl Schornbaum, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer* II (Leepizig, 1934) 52.

8 Karl Schornbaum, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer* V (Gütersloh, 1951) 70. Of the numerous other Anabaptist statements only a few follow: *Quellen* V, 127, "Item von der Obrigkeit sagt er, das alle Obrigkeit die wer von God eingesetzt"; *Quellen* II, 36, "Er halt, das die obrigkeit, die itzund ist, von God sei aufgesetzt"; *ibid.*, 52, "Die obrigait oder gewalt is darumb von got anfenklich eingesetzt worden"; *ibid.*, 72," . . . sie sei nit von den menschen gesetzt sonder von Gott"; *Codex Kunstbuch*, fol. 247 b, "Einem Jeden volch hat Gott ein obrekheit veordnet"; Peter Riedemann, *Rechenschafft Unserer Religion* (Berlin, 1870) 327, "Die Oberkeit is eingesetzt un geordnet von Gott" A.J.F. Zieglschmid, *Die älteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder* (New York, 1943) 307, "Darumb ist ist die Obrigkait ein Ordung Gottes"; *ibid.*, 387, "Sie haben In auch gefraght Woher die Obrigkeit sey, Er sagt inen, das Ampt und der gwalt ist von Gott"; *ibid.*, 433, "Wegen Ihres von Gott geordneten Ampts das inn dieser argen welt so wol von nöten ist als dz täglich Brot"; Beatrice Jenny, *Das Schleitheimer Täuferbekenntnis* (Thayingen, 1951) 31, "Das schwert ist eyn Gottis ordenung"; *Acta Des Gesprächs zwüschenn predicantenn Vnnd Tauffbruderenn Ergangen Inn der Statt Bernt . . . Im M.C. XXXVIIIten Jar*, 236, "Jr bekhennent das das wellttlich Regiment von goot jngesetzt vnnd ein Ordnung gottes sye"; *Regensburger Stadtarchiv Eccl. I*, 52, 44," . . . sprechen auch mit Paulo, das kain Obrigkait sey on von Gott"; *Staatsarchiv Bern, Unnütze Papiere*, 80, Nr. 6, *Eingabe der Täufer ex 1528* "Wir wüssend und bezügen, dass ein oberkeytt von gott verordnet ist und gesatzt."

This governmental authority, which has its origin in God, is necessary for human society.[9] The close affinity between Anabaptist thought and the Reformation finds its expression in numerous Anabaptist confessions,[10] which invalidate any conflicting statements coming from the Reformers.[11] A rare Anabaptist voice in support of a radical view comes from Austria: "Es sei auch unser obrigkhait, die wir haben, allain vom tufl und nit von Got."[12]

The basis for the general Anabaptist position is a repeated and direct reference to the Scriptures, though pragmatic thinking may occasionally be encountered.[13] Again and again the Anabaptists refer to the Apostle Paul and indicate that they wish to follow his words.[14]

According to Anabaptist thinking the origin of the state is directly related to the flood and thereby to human sin.[15] The state is God's answer to human sin.[16] It is an indication of God's punishment

9 Josef Beck, *Die Geschichtsbücher der Wiedertäufer in Oesterreich-Ungarn* (Wien, 1883) 170, "Sagen wir erstlich, daz ja in der welt obrigkaiten sein"; *Acta Des Gesprächs,* 254, "Es habennt die Touffbrüder gestannden, das sölle vnnd müsse ein Oberkheitt sin, von wegenn der bössenn, die sich mitt dem Evangelio christi nitt lassent ziechenn, damitt jnen gewertt das die fridsamen woll mögen lebenn, Sye von Nötten, das Es ein Oberkheitt sye, die söllich Straffe"; *Quellen* II, 136, "Ja, man muss obrigkeit haben von der bosen wegen, und sind alle von got geordnet, si sei bos order gut"; Zieglschmid, *op. cit.,* 307, "Denn ein Obrigkait soll vnd muess sein in der velt vnder den Menschen So wol als das täglich Brot vnd so wol als ein Schuelmeister die rueten muess haben bey den Kinder"; *ibid.,* 433, "Wegen Ires von Gott geordneten Ampte das inn diser argen welt so wol von nöten ist als dz täglich brot"; *Quellen* II, 43, "Er halt, das under den christen gesatzte oberkait sein sollen, und das aller gewalt von got sei"; *Handlung oder Acta gehaltener Disputation und Gespräch zu Zoffingen mit den Widertöuffern* (Zürich, 1532) 78a, "Also bekennend wir vnd haltend das ein Oberkeit vnd Regiment vnder wält sin sol, verordnet allenthalben von Gott"; *ibid.,* 78b, "dz ein weltliche oberkeyt sin sölle zu straaff vnnd schirm"; Leonhard von Muralt, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz* (Zürich, 1952) 60, ". . . dann er wol wüsse, das man ein oberkeit haben müsse"; Joachim von Watt, *Deutsche historische Schriften* (St. Gall, 1879) 501, ". . . dass oberkaiten sin söllind, ja dass si von Got hie sigend und der bruch des schwertz ordenlich und gut und von nöten si, bekennend wir."

10 Modern scholarship has repeatedly recognized this fact; cf. Georg Wünsch, *op. cit.,* 212, and Beatrice Jenny, *op. cit.* Fritz Heyer's emphasis on a "deep distinction" in this respect (*op. cit.,* 84) is probably too one-sided, especially in light of the fact that some of his sources, such as *op. cit.,* 84, note 8, are taken out of their context.

11 Felix Manz supposedly stated on governmental authority "dass die nit sin söllte"; Emil Egli, *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Züricher Reformation* (Zürich, 1879) 310. Cf the statement about another Anabaptist who supposedly declared that "kein oberkeit sin sölle," *ibid.,* 309. Manz himself repudiated this charge, Leonhard von Muralt, *op. cit.,* 93, "das er rede oder glert habe, das man kein oberkeit sölle habenn, der thuge in gwalt und unrecht."

12 Ammann Hartmann, *Die Wiedertäufer in Michelsburg* (Brixen, 1896) 39.

13 H. Schnell, *Gründlicher Bericht aus Gottes Wort wie man die weltiche und geistliche Regiment* . . . (in Codex Geiser, typewritten copy in Mennonite Historical Library in Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana) 114, "dan wo die Oberkeit nicht war, so köndt man nicht leben vnd haushalten vff Erden."

14 Compare the comment that the Apostles did not teach "dz die obrigkait nit sein soll oder mege," Lydia Müller, *Glaubenszeugnisse oberdeutscher Taufgesinnter,* 250; *"Regensburger Stadtarchiv," op. cit.,* "sprechen auch mit Paulo das kain Obrigkait sye on von Gott"; *Handlung oder Acta,* 86b," Vnser grund vnd anfang ist wie Rom, xiij stadt vnd ouch nach dem gesatz des alten Testaments dz wir bekenned ein oberkeydt syn solle"; *Aufdeckung der Babylonischen Hure (MQR* XXXII) c iij a, "so müssen sy auch durch der welt Regenten daruon Paulus Ephe. 6. redet so wider Christum streitten beherrscht werden."

15 H. Schnell, *op. cit.,* 114, "Dort ist die Oberkeit die Gott der welt nach dem Sündfluss geben"; *ibid.,* 114, "Von disem gewalt des Schwärts, den Gott der andern neüwen welt nach dem Sündfluss geben und bewolen hat"; "Handbüchlein wider den Prozess der zu Worms am Rhein wider die Brüder so man die Hutterischen nennt ausgegangen ist im 1557. Jahr" (unpublished manuscript in Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, Indiana) 7, ". . . darum er ihnen auch nach der Sündfluth Obrigkeit verordnet"; Riedemann, *op. cit.,* 328, "Darum jnen auch nach der sündflut oberkeit verordnet"; *ibid.,* 404, "Darumb gab er jhnen nach der sündfluss jre Oberheit." The similarity of the two sources is significant.

16 Compare Alfred Farner, *Die Lehre von Kirche und Staat bei Zwingli* (Tübingen, 1930), who emphasizes that for Zwingli, too, the institution of governmental authority was a necessary evil brought about by the fall. The same statement as regards Luther by Kurt Matthes, *Luther*

and shows His divine wrath.[17] But it also expresses God's love, as it shows that God does not wish to lead man to the ultimate consequence of sin, but wants order and peace even among a rebellious and sinful mankind.[18] The very existence of the office of government therefore points to that time when sin shall be no more—Christ's second coming and the Last Judgment.[19] The Anabaptists recognized that God's grace and wrath are integral aspects of the office of government.[20]

The state is ordained by God. The Anabaptist writers make this statement without qualification, and come to the far-reaching conclusion that even a tyrannical ruler has been ordained into his office by God. "Even Nero," says an Anabaptist, "the great tyrannt with a violent, blood-thirsty mind, and Pharaoh, who tortured the children of Israel, and Pilate, who received power from above to crucify Christ—were servants of God."[21] This statement indicates a profound understanding of the mystery that God's creation rises against the creator, but can only do so with such power as God has given. In this context it is pointed out by the Anabaptist writers that even a tyrannical government—as the Roman emperors, for example, "who shed innocent blood as if it were water"[22]—maintains a minimum of peace, law and order in the world. Thereby it fulfills its task, given by God, which justifies its very existence.[23]

The notion of rebellion or revolution must therefore have been

und die Obrigkeit (München, 1937) 40. Occasionally one finds in Luther the idea of a "prelapsarian" necessity of government. The question remains in what sense a distinction must be made between the flood and the fall.

17 *Handbüchlein, op, cit.,* 11, ". . . das der Weltlichen gewalt aus Ungnad Zorn u. Rach seinen Ursprung her hat u. darum von Gott erweckt das Gott kundthut, wie den Paulus deutlich anzeigt das sie Geschier sind seines Zorns, ja zubereitet oder zu gerichtet sind zur verdamnis"; *ibid.,* 7, "Bekennen u. sagen, das die Obrigkeit u. Gewalt dieser Erden von Gott verordnet u. gestellt ist um des Volkes abtreten willen"; Riedemann, *op. cit.* 328, "Also ist offenbar, dz die oberkeit nit aus gnaden, sonder aus vngnade vnd zorn geben ist. Vnd das nach dem abker des volcks, wen sy got verliessen, vnd dem fleisch volgeten, so müst sy auch widerum fleisch beherschen"; *ibid.,* 407, "Also sehen wir, woher erstlich der weltlich gewalt kumen, vnd was gott beweget hat den selbigen zu geben, warzu sy aber geordnet sein ist auch gesagt Nemlich zu der rach über den bösen."

19 H. Schnell, *op. cit.,* 113, ". . . vnd wird auch bleiben biss auff den letzten Tag seiner Zukunfft, da Gott allen gewalt der Erden wird aufheben."

18 *Aufdeckung,* B ij b, "Also ward auch dem Mose das Schwert über die sittlichen satzungen befohlen auf das Frid vndern kindern der bossheit erhalten wurde."

20 E. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* I (Leipzig, 1917) 87, considers love and wrath as the two forms of the "effectual" existence of God in the office of government.

21 H. Schnell, *op. cit.,* 116; Paul Roth, *Aktensammlung zur Geschichte der Basler Reformation* (Basel, 1921) II, 546, "Zudem bekent ouch Crystus, das der gewalt Pylaty von Got gewesen"; compare here Zwingli's remark, *Werke,* III, 881, "Non enim est potestas nisi a deo. Quid, o Paule! An Pharaonis potestas a deo erat? Nimirum! propter peccata enim nostra imponit deus pueros et effoeminatos cervicibus nostris"; Zieglschmid, *op. cit.,* 306, "Der Herr nennt auch den König Nebucadnezar seinen Knecht, desgleichen den König Cirus, Noch sindt sie nur haiden gwesen"; *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer,* I, 1062, "Dann wissend vil lass der schrift nach den wir nemlich seinen Knecht nennt"; compare again the interesting statement of Zwingli that Nebuchadnezzar was more devout than most people of Zwingli's time, *Scholia in Daniel,* 99.

22 H. Schnell, *op. cit.,* 117.

23 Peter Riedemann, *op. cit.,* 327, "Wo es aber misshandlet wirt, so ist . . . der selbig vnbraucht vnrecht, das ampt aber bleibt nichtz des weniger, wie es geordnet ist."

utterly foreign to the Anabaptist mind,[24] and we can consider essentially non-Anabaptist all groups of the "left wing" of the Reformation which advocated either in principle or practice the overthrow of existing governmental order. Such an overthrow would presuppose a qualitative distinction between a "good" and a "bad" government. Nowhere in Anabaptist literature is such a distinction made. A good government is therefore never so "good" that it conforms to God's ultimate revelation in Jesus Christ; and a "bad" government, on the other hand, is never so bad that it would cease to be a servant of God.[25]

THE TASKS OF THE STATE

The essence of the governmental office is its function of maintaining order. Human sin would make orderly living together impossible, were it not for this power. It has to "punish the bad, to protect and cover the pious."[26] This task of governmental power is twofold. First, it punishes evildoers. Positively this implies protection for the weak. At the Franckenthal disputation of 1571 an Anabaptist speaker referred to governmental authority as a "friedhalterin"; its position is compared to that of a fence placed by the owner of a garden between his good fruit and the wild beasts. The government serves likewise: it protects the law-abiding citizens from the evil ones.[27] This makes its office a blessing.[28] As a hindrance of evil, government is a good order in the world; the exercise of governmental

24 One of the earliest and most emphatic Anabaptist sources is Grebel's letter to Thomas Müntzer, Leonhard von Muralt, *Quellen*, 20, "Wellist darvon abstan und allem gutdunken ietz und hernach, so wirst du gar rein werden."

25 It is therefore regrettable that Lowell H. Zuck's article in *Church History* XXVI, 3, "Anabaptism: Abortive Counter-Revolt Within the Reformation," should once more echo the old contention that "the first Anabaptists were revolutionary in attitude and act." The evidence advanced by Zuck is greatly insufficient, as it is based almost exclusively on Müntzer, Hofmann, and Rothmann. His interpretation of Menno must be considered unsatisfactory. Hans Weischenfelder's testimony of Hans Hut is not sufficient to clear up the still obscure position. Hut's "Urgicht" of Augsburg, as published by Meyer, "Zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer in Oberschwaben," *Zeitschrift d. Hist. Vereins f. Schwaben und Neuburg*, I (1874) 228, seemingly indicates that his political view of the state coincides with that of the Reformers. To add further uncertainty, the Hutterite chronicle pictures Hut as having an opposing view (Zieglschmid, *op. cit.*, 30).

26 Claus Felbinger's Confession, *MQR* XXIX (1955) 195; R. Steck, *Aktensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation* (Bern, 1922) 1041, "Er bekennt, dass sy von gott ingesetzt, das böss ze straffen und guts ze pflanzen"; *Regensburger Stadtarchiv, op. cit.*, ". . . damit die frumen vnnter yr im frid erhalten, die bösen aber durch sy gezuchtiget werden, die weil sy ain dienerin Gottes zur rach verordnet ist"; *Handlung oder Acta*, 97 a, "Nach der ordnung des alten Testaments findent jr wol das die wältlichen ein semliches regiment füren, das böss zustraffen, vnnd das gut zeschirmen wie es ouch Christus zulasst. Matth. v. vnd xxj"; C. A. Cornelius, *Geschichte des Münsterischen Aufruhrs* (Leipzig, 1860) 269, "Bekenne, dasz der weltlich oberkeit das schwert den bösen zur straf und den guten zur ufbawung geben und befohlen ist"; *Staatsarchiv Bern*, ". . . dass gutt zu pschirmen und das bess zu straffen, uf das wir in frid und einigkeytt mügen by ein andren wandlen, sunst wurde bald ein merdergruben us der welt."

27 *Quellen* IV, 190.

28 *Regensburger Stadtarchiv*, ". . . verordnet zum frid menschlichen lebens"; *Aufdeckung der Babylonische Hure*, B iij a, ". . . auss der ordnung des getrewen Gottes, der des verfallen flaisches aigenschafft erkannt vnd wisste das ausser der leiblichen forscht allda nit fride würd sein"; R. Steck, *op. cit.*, 1042, "Sye userwelt von oben herab, inen das schwert bevolchen, die armen zu erkennen, wittwen und weysen zu beschirmen und die guten handthaben."

power and authority is proper, good, and necessary.[29] That God has instituted this power shows "wolgünnen und lieb Gottes zu den Menschen,"[30] it shows His grace and mercy.[31] An Anabaptist confession of faith of 1571 declares that the office and power of the government were instituted by God and ordained by divine Providence for the good of mankind,[32] and the unknown author of the *Aufdeckung der Babylonischen Hure* confesses:

> Erstlich der Obrigkait halben das wir dieselbig nach den Worten des heiligen Apostels Rom. 13. für diener Gottes Inn der welt halten vnnd das sie seyen ein notwendige guete Gottes ordnung Zur straff des bösen vnnd schutz des gueten.[33]

For Anabaptist thinking, such power and authority of government includes the right over life and death of its people.[34] Aside from direct sources, however rare, this can be deduced also from the general Anabaptist understanding of the office of government. The resolute Anabaptist rejection of any participation in governmental office is only fully understandable if the taking of life is understood as an integral part of this office.[35]

To the student of Reformation history and the thought of Luther and Zwingli it is apparent that the Anabaptist view of the nature of the state, as sketched in these paragraphs, concurs almost entirely with the political ethics of the Reformation. This significant fact, long suspected by the proponents of modern Anabaptist scholarship, constitutes the first important finding of our study and should make possible disapproval of all insistence that the Anabaptist attitude involved a basic negation of the governmental order.

29 Joachim Watt, *op. cit.*, 501, "ordenlich und gut und von nöten"; H. Schnell, *op. cit.*, 114, "eine gute Ordnung in der Welt"; Lydia Müller, *op. cit.* 252, "ist ein notwendige guete ordnung in der welt unter denen, die Gott nicht förchten"; *Quellen Hessen*, 339, "Glaubt er, das die oberkeit von got geordnet nutzlich und gut sei"; *Quellen* II, "Hat er geantwürt, der weltlich obrigkeit ist güt."

30 *Aufdeckung*, B ii b.

31 *ibid.*, B ii a.

32 *Quellen Hessen*, 427, ". . . das das ampt vnd der gewalt der oberkeit von Gott ingesatzt und dem menschlichen geschlecht zu gut durch göttlich fursehung geordnet, geregiert und erhalten wirt, doch nit anders dan das sie als diener gottes söllend das gut handhaben, den frommen beschutzen und das böse und den ubelthäter strafen."

33 A. J. F. Zieglschmid, *op. cit.*, 523.

34 The *Schleitheim Confession* describes the task of the government as "welches den bösen strafft vnd toted," Jenny, *op. cit.*, 114, "von Gott gelehrt Rach zu geben, die blutschuldigen vnd Mörder zu thödten."

35 It is therefore not too easily possible to claim that the Anabaptists rejected capital punishment, as Kurt Goldammer, "Friedensidee und Toleranzgedanke bei Paracelsus," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* XLVII (1956) 46, 26, suggests. Possibly we encounter here another distinction between Anabaptism and Spiritualism. However, this problem needs further study. Cf. Balthasar Hubmaier, *Von dem Schwert*, B. i, "das sy solle die frommen bschützen vnd bschirmen auch die bösen straffen vnd vmb bringen." A contrasting statement is found in *Quellen Zürich*, 335, "Vnnd die weil dann Cristus nit allein im allten Gesatz zehen gepotten, sunder ouch euangeli an ziemlich gnug orten verpotten, das man nyemands tödten, hallte er, das eyn oberkeit mit keynem cristlichen gemüt weder mörder noch dieben tödten, aber die lut nach der wortten Pauli zwüschen die wennd leggen vnnd biss zu bekerung verworren sölle," It should be mentioned, however, that the speaker of these words held a view of the state similar to that of the Reformation.

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STATE

It is only in the area of the limitations of governmental power that we encounter the initial discrepancy between Anabaptism and the Reformers. For the Anabaptists such limits are closely related to their understanding of the tasks of governmental authority. The focal point of their position is the spiritual realm, where government possesses no jurisdiction.

This is evident as early as October 1523, on the occasion of the second disputation in Zürich: Grebel's challenge to continue discussion of the abuses of the Mass is met by Zwingli's response that this matter falls within the authority of the City Council.[36] H. S. Bender considers this the first essential break between the Grebel group and Zwingli.[37] Later, Conrad Grebel affirms his willingness to be obedient in all temporal affairs, which evidently would exclude the spiritual realm from the jurisdiction of the City Council.[38] At the Zofingen disputation an Anabaptist spokesman said that one may be disobedient in such matters as concern the inner man. In other matters obedience is practiced.[39]

So man ihm die Oberkeit über sins üsserlichen (von innen herus gewirkten) Sachen satzt, deren Amt dann, nach Bruch Christi Worten Matth. 20 äusserlich mit Gewalt fahren, herrschen, gebieten, und verbieten ist, wie kanns dann on sin, dess sie sich nit in die Gewissen mit Gebieten und Verbieten inlassen, und dass äusserlich, das von innen vom Herzen, Conscienz und Gewissen heraus geflossen, also mit Zwang und Drang beherrschen.[40]

A government attempting to rule the hearts of men is overstepping its functions and tasks.[41] Christ alone is the Lord of man's conscience.[42] The Anabaptist understanding of baptism as the free and

36 *Zwingli Werke,* II, 783 ff.

37 Harold S. Bender, *Conrad Grebel* (Goshen, 1950) 94 ff. Bender follows here the interpretation of John Horsch, "The Faith of the Swiss Brethren," *MQR* IV (1930) 255 ff. More recently a further elaboration was undertaken by John H. Yoder, "The Anabaptist Dissent," *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottdale, 1957) 93-104. Yoder feels that the initial clash between the Swiss Brethren and Zwingli is a conflict between Biblicism and Humanism. His interpretation is doubtless somewhat inadequate. While humanist influences in Zwingli must no doubt be conceded—cf. Arthur Rich, *Die Anfänge der Theologie Huldrych Zwinglis* (Zürich, 1949) *passim*—it seems that the difference between the two parties must be sought in a conflicting understanding of the Scriptures: If Zwingli grants to the City Council certain jurisdiction in carrying out the Reformation in Zürich, this has its cause in his particular understanding of the Scriptures. Cf. Fritz Blanke, "The First Anabaptist Congregation." *MQR* XXVII (1953) 31.

38 *Quellen Zürich,* 175, "Wölle sunst minen herren ghorsam sin inn allennn anderen weltlichen dingenn"; cf. *Quellen Hessen,* 227, "Aber so die oberkeit das schwert nit recht brauche, wolle er nit gehorsam sein."

39 *Handlung oder Acta,* 83 b.

40 *Apologia der Wiedertheuffren an h. Obrekheit der Stadt Bern usw.* (n.p., n.d.), manuscript copy in Goshen College Library; *Quellen* II, 26, "Aber von dem wort Gottes wollen sie sich nit durch fürstlichen gepot, die wider gott sei, abtrinken lassen machen."

41 *Regensburger Stadtarchiv,* "Wo die Obrigkeit auss irer ordnung träte, vnd wider Gott vnd sein warhait vnser gewissen regiren anordnen vnd beherschen wolten, welches alain des geists Jesu Christi ist, da widern wir vns alles gehorsams."

42 *Ibid.,* "derhalb sagen wir ainfeltigklich, das wir aller Obrigkait von Gott, daruntter wir hie auff erden wonen vnd leben, gehorsam erscheinen wollen wie obgemeld, aber biss auff das gewissen, welches wir vnserm Herrn Jesu Christo gefreiet haben, daruber wir auch keinen andern gwalt herren vnd richter sein lassen kunnen." *Quellen* II, 38, "Er sei wider die weltlich obrigkait nit, dann der soll man nach der lere Cristi geben, was ir zusteet, aber was die

uncompelled decision of the individual to follow Christ is closely related to this problem. It restates the conviction that faith cannot be compelled.[43]

The question of the relationship of this position to the views held by the Reformers arises here. It is known that the Reformers also held the belief that true faith cannot be compelled.[44] However, this principle was never understood in the absolute sense that a government *eo ipso* lacks the authority to function in the spiritual realm. On the contrary, the state was *defensor fidei* and therefore possessed certain functions.[44a] According to Reformation thought it was possible for the individual to possess his own private faith. However as soon as he publicly upheld such belief, he had to leave the country.[45] The authority of the state to regulate in its territory the external, and thereby in a real sense the internal faith, was never questioned by the Reformers.[46] The presence of dissenters woould imply civil disorder. This danger of civil disorder was one of Zwingli's major accusations against the Anabaptists.[47] It is in the conflict between the Reformers and Anabaptism that the inherent principle of Protestantism was first and decisively challenged: the problem of the absence of objective authority as a category in Protestant thought. Thus Luther never recognized the validity of the Anabaptists' claim of freedom to follow the dictates of their conscience, even though this was precisely what he had claimed for himself.[48]

The Anabaptist position embodies a concept of religious liberty which is the most advanced of the Reformation era.[49] If the member-

seelen oder menschen gewissen betreffen, darüber sollen sie nichtss zu gebieten haben," *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer, Elsass* (Manuscript copy in Goshen College Library), "Der Obrigkeit nit gestehen wollen, das sie über glauben gesatz oder gewalt darüber habe."

43 Cf. Franklin Littell, *The Anabaptist View of the Church*, 64 ff.

44 Cf. *Zwingli Werke* III, 437, "Also ist kundtlich, dass ghein zwang den glouben velschen mag, wo er ist"; for Luther, cf. *WA* XXX, II, 401, 9 ff., 264.

44a John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion II* (Philadelphia, 1936) 772, defines the tasks of the state "to cherish and support external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of man, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquility."

45 Alfred Farner has rightly pointed out that this principle was in effect in Zürich as early as 1525, *op. cit.*, 88. This modifies a statement made earlier by Karl Holl, *op. cit.*, 484.

46 Both Farner, *op. cit.*, 88, and Holl, *op. cit.*, 485, claimed that nobody was ever punished by the Reformation on account of his faith. As any belief must manifest and realize itself in certain external matters which fell under the jurisdiction of governmental authority there is no evidence of religious freedom in the Reformation.

47 Cf. Alfred Farner, *op. cit.*, 86 ff.

48 On Luther's concept of tolerance, cf. Johannes Kühn, *Toleranz und Offenbarung* (Leipzig, 1923).

49 In spite of the thorough studies by Bainton, Hermelinck, Lecler, etc., there is still no general consensus in historical scholarship on the relationship between the Reformation and religious liberty. This applies also to the specific problem of the Anabaptist attitude: Recently Harold S. Bender, "The Anabaptists and Religious Liberty in the 16th Century," *MQR* XXIX (1955) emphasized the Anabaptist contribution and suggested several bases for the Anabaptist position. Others, like Heinrich Hermelinck, *Der Toleranzbegriff im Reformationszeitalter* (Leipzig, 1908), and more recently Lowell Zuck, *op. cit.*, p. 223, emphatically denied any significant Anabaptist contribution and on the contrary referred to them as the "most intolerant" Reformation group.

Unfortunately, this disagreement seems largely the result of a somewhat unprecise terminology, as "religious liberty" and "tolerance"—two terms that have often been used inter-

ship of the individual in a congregation is to be decided solely by that individual, then the possibility of several conflicting decisions has to be recognized, and religious pluralism allowed. According to Anabaptist thinking there is no necessity for governmental authority to exert jurisdiction in this regard to bring about external uniformity. Even Turks and Jews should be left alone to live according to their faith—a truly revolutionary position for the sixteenth century.[50] Felix Manz said that the Zürich City Council should "let the others stay by their faith" (*die anderen irs gloubens lassenn plibenn*).[51] And the unknown author of the Anabaptist hymn refers to the example of Christ:

> Christus thut niemand zwingen
> zu seiner Herrligkeit,
> Allein wirts dem gelingen
> der willig ist bereyt.[52]

OBEDIENCE TO GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY

Undoubtedly the most common charge against the Anabaptists was that they were planning civil rebellion. Even Zwingli, who, because of his long acquaintance with Grebel and his followers, should have been thoroughly acquainted with their goals, stated:

> Und uss dem allem konne er nudts anders ermessenn, dann das das schlechtlich ir entliche meinung sige, das sy damit habind understanden iren hufen ze meren, damit sy sich der oberkeit entsegenn möchtind.[53]

This attitude may have had its reason in the radical elements with which the Anabaptists were always and immediately identified. The constant Anabaptist affirmations of obedience were of little avail.

changeably—do not necessarily connote the same thing. "Tolerance" should be understood as referring to the attitude one holds towards one's fellow man. How does he feel about the differing religious views? Does he recognize him as a brother? "Religious liberty," on the other hand, seems to deal more with the problem of governmental interference in matters of faith and religion. It should be understood as the freedom to live, undisturbed by the state, according to one's faith; cf. Heinrich Hoffmann, "Reformation und Gewissensfreiheit," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte,* XXXVII (1940) 170. In this context it soon becomes evident that there is substantial reason why "tolerance" would arise in Western Civilization in the Age of Enlightenment with its emphasis on natural religion. As regards "religious liberty," it needs to be pointed out that the positive position of Anabaptism is strong and unequivocal, Lowell Zuck's recent assertion notwithstanding.

50 Cf. Abraham Hulshof, *Geschiedenis van de Doopsgezinden te Straatsburg van 1525 tot 1557* (Amsterdam, 1905) 247, "Ich wais auch das nymer mer recht ist einen im glauben zu nottigen, er glaub wie er woll, es sey Jud oder Turck, auch so ainer nicht rechtgeschaffen glaubt noch glauben will. . . . Und halten wir uns nach ebenbild Christi uns seiner apostelen und verkhundigen das Evangelion nach der gnad, die er uns vertraut hat, dringen niemand"; Hans Denck, *Micha der Prophet usw.,* fol. 54 a, "Das auch je einer den andern, er sei Türck oder heyd glaub was er wöll, sicher wirt lassen ziehen vnnd wonen, durch vnd inn seim landt. . . . Er soll keyner den andern, daz einer eyn heyd, ein jud, oder Christ were, lassen entgelte sunder durch alle landt eim jeglichen im namen seines Gots vergunnen zuo ziehen."

51 *Quellen Zürich,* 216.

52 *Ibid.,* 221; cf. A. J. F. Zieglschmid, *Kleingeschichtsbuch der Hutterischen Brüder* (Philadelphia, 1947) 167, "Dann ir missbraucht also den Gwalt den Gott geordnet hat, zu beschützen die frommen vnd zur straff der übeltheter vnd nit über den glauben dann demselben steet allein der Herr Christus vor zu regieren (vnd nit der Babst oder weltlich gwalt) Welcher Herr denn niemand will gezwungen oder genöttiget Ja noch bil weniger vmbs glaubens willen yemandt getödt haben als yetzt di welt thuet."

53 Zwinglis Werke, *Corpus Reformatorum,* 91, 173.

As late as 1557, after decades of severe persecution had reduced the Anabaptist movement to practical insignificance, the charge of *aufrührerische Lehren* remained.[54] The benevolent view of such an impartial observer as Sebastian Franck was without substantial influence.[55]

The basis for obedience to governmental authority is the particular Anabaptist understanding of the nature of government; since it has been instituted by God it has also been empowered to ask obedience from its people.[56] Five basic reasons summarize the Anabaptist willingness to be obedient to governmental authority:

(1) Obedience to the state is one aspect of the more general obedience to God which is required of every Christian. Thus obedience assumes a dimension of gratitude toward God, who through the ordination of the office of government has shown His love toward mankind.[57] Disobedience against the state is disobedience against God.[58]

(2) The basis for such obedience is the command of the Scriptures: "Dan die schrift weise inen dahin, da er der oberkeit gehorsam sein soll."[59] The Scriptures point out that Jesus, too, was obedient to human government.[60] Only what is grounded in the Scriptures, therefore, can be carried out with good conscience.

(3) Just as the Anabaptist view of the nature of the state makes no qualitative distinction between a good or bad government, so their willingness to be obedient to temporal authority is independent

54 *Quellen* I, 162; occasionally differences were recognized within the "left wing," such as the *Kirchenordnung des Pfalzgrafen Wolfgang, Quellen* IV, 264 ff.

55 Sebastian Franck, *Chronica, Zeytbuch vnd Geschycht-Bibel* (Strassburg, 1531) ccccxlix, "Ich besorg mich vor keynem volck weniger eyner auffrur, wann ich Babst, Keyser vnd der Turk selbs wer, dann vor diesem."

56 *Quellen Hessen*, 428, "Wir gleuben, erkennen und bekennen, das die untertanen der oberkeit den gehorsam schuldig sein"; *Quellen* II, 89, "Der Hut hat gesagt, man soll der obrigkeit geben, was man ir schuldig"; *Handlung oder Acta*, 104 a, "Gbürt vns ouch nach dem glevsch vnder dz schwärdt zu wärffen nach d'ordnung gottes, angäsehen zu straff des bösen vnd schyrm des guten. Das ist vnser gehorsame wie sv ouch die Apostel gleert da die erst kilch jre vrsprung gehebt hat'; Joachim Watt, *op. cit.*, 501, ". . . sind wir unbietig aller oberkait in allem dem, dess si nit embären will, so ferr es der pflicht, die wir God schuldig, nit wider ist. Und ob sie uns schon beroub und zu armut bringt wider billichs und rechtz, so tragend und duldend wirs, wan wir sölicher beschwerd on verlezung oder ufruf nit alsin könnend."

57 *Aufdeckung*, B ij b, "Vnnd auss diesem wolgünnen und lieb zu den menschen sein auch schuldig vmb der lieb willen die waren Christen als Gotteskinder dem ausswenigen gwalt alle ghorsam vnd vnderthenigkait zubeweisen biss in den leiblichen tod."

58 *Eine kurtze einfaltige erkanntnuss vff die dry zehen artikell so verlouffen 1572. Jars zu Franckenthal In der pfaltz disputiert worden* (n.p., 1590) 132, "Darum ist die Oberkeitt ein ordnung Gotts, die wir ouch billich vom ampts wegen gern in Ehren halten vollend, Jnen liebs vnd guts bewysen, ouch Inen in allem, was nitt wider Gott ist."

59 *Quellen Hessen*, 227; note 60, *Aufdeckung*, A iij, "Dan Christus ist vnter allem gwalt hat sich keines gwalts nie verdwidert also auch noch heut nicht verwidern"; *Acta oder Handlung* etc., 86 b, "Christus hat sin volck im nüwen Testament gefryet doch dz sy sich der ordnung des vatters nit widerigen sonder wie Paulus vn Petrus leert der oberkeyt gehorsam sin söllent"; Christian Meyer, *op. cit.*, 227, "Uff den 59. articul: sie halten, wie Paulus unnd Christus anzaigen, das man den oberkaiten gehorsamen sein solle"; *ibid.*, 228, "Das sy solks, diweil sy under der oberkait sein wolten, zu thun schuldig wern, wie auch Christus gethan und sich under die oberkeit begeben hete, wa sy aber solks nit thun woltenm möchten sie verkauffen, was sy hetten und weck ziehen"; *Handlung oder Acta*, 78 a, "Hierinn leert Petrus die glöubigen darumb das sy fry syend worden durch das blut Jesu Christi das sy sich darumb nit söllend widerigen der ordnung Gottes in denen dingen die dem Euangelio gemäss sind."

of the moral character of a state.[61] For it is not fear of punishment which motivates such obedience, but the Christian's conscience striving to fulfill the will of God.[62]

(4) The limits of Anabaptist obedience are related to the understanding of the legitimate functions of any government. Since these functions embrace only the exercise of public law and order, no obedience can be asked for in the spiritual realm. If it is required, it can—according to Anabaptist thinking—legitimately be refused.[63]

(5) Such limits of obedience are of a passive nature. This implies the passive refusal of obedience and rules out emphatically any active rebellion or revolution against the existing order.[64] This aspect forms the sharp line of distinction between Anabaptism and the radical factions of the "left wing."

PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENTAL OFFICES

Of basic importance for the Anabaptists was the question as to whether a Christian could occupy a governmental office? Could a

61 Joachim Watt, *op. cit.*, 501, "Bekennend wir und sagend mit Paulo Röm. 13, dass alle mentschen der oberkeit ghorsam oder underton sind söllind, nit allain der geschlachten und fridlichen, sondern ouch der tyrannischen, um der ursach willen, dass aller gwalt uss Gottes verhengnuss hie ist"; *Regensburger Stadtarchiv*, "Wir haben oben vrkund geben, das wir nit alein den geschlachten sonder ouch den vngschlachten Obern vnd gewaltigen gehorsam sein wollen, in allen billichen sachen, so weit vns Gottes geist den gehorsam lernt, biss auf das gewissen, damit nit ir vngehorsam und vbertretung uns zu sundern machen, vn wir beide in gleiches urteil der straff Gottes fielen"; Peter Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 327, "Darumb ist auch das ampt zu Eeren. Denn ob es gleich gottlose innen haben, so wird doch das ampt darumb nit auffgehoben"; Leonhard Dax, "Refutation und gruendliche Widerlegung Christ-Welt: Anschlag und Fuerwenden . . . gestellt auf 26 Artickel: Die Brüder die man die Hutterischen nennt" (n.p., 1561, typewritten manuscript at Wheathill Bruderhof, England) 31, "Undt wie woll sie ihren Amt undt Standt nach untreulich vorstehn, indem dz sie vill mer die fromen Gottes kinder beleidigen, will geschweigen iren Amt nach schitzen undt schuermen sollen, jedoch so sagt Christus undt auch Gott was wir dann schuldig sein leisten sollen."

62 *Handlung oder Acta, op. cit.*, 104 a, "Man sol aber jnen vmb der gwüssne willen gehorsam sin gegen Gott."

63 Zieglschmid, *op. cit.*, 307, "Vnser will vnd Sinn ist nit, ein weltlich Obrigkait abzuthuen. Oder ir nit gehorsam zu sein im guten vnd billichen"; Staatsarchiv Bern, "Unnütze Papiere" 80, "sind auch des erbitig aller menschlichen oberkeytt underwürlich und gehorsam ze sein, was lib und gutt antrifft"; *Quellen* II, 72, "Darum was gespiet, sol man halten. Aber was wider den christen glauben und der sel seligkeit sei, das heis er nit"; *Quellen Hessen*, 45, "Item er sagt ouch, obrigkeit sol man gehorsamen leisten, so vern das sie nicht wider got gebiten tue"; *ibid.*, 380, "Wenn sie mich heist das ich tun soll, so tue ichs, Heist sie mich was böses, so soll ichs lassen"; *ibid.*, 94. "Ich will der oberkeit gehorsam sein, wo es nicht wider got ist: Summa: Ich will vorhin wissen, ob sie fuge habe oder nit, ehe dann ich gehorsam were"; *ibid.*, 197, "Ich will aller oberkait undertan sein in alle dem, das nit wider gott ist, zu liebe und zu leide gleich wie ein ander fromme burger"; Zieglschmid, *Chronik*, 433, "Der weltlichen Obrigkait war man Vnderthenig vnd Gehorsam zu gueten wercken Was nit wider Gott widern Glauben oder gewissen war"; Beck, *Geschichtsbücher*, 251, "Das man der Obrigkait in Allem Gehorsam schulde. was nicht gegen Gottes ist"; *Quellen* IV 357. "Vnd souil die oberkhait belanngt sagt er, das sey verr von inen vnnd so sie mercketenn das ainer vnder inen diss zu thon willens, thon sie den von inen usschliessen, darfts kheiner dencken, zu geschweigen wider die oberkhait zeratschlagen."

64 *Quellen Hessen*, 394, "Wan sie zusammen komen, . . . bitten vor die oberkeit, vor ihre feinde, die sie verfolgen, und alle menschen, das sie from werden und sich bekeren; sein bekentnus werde ausweisen, ob sie ufruhr gegen die oberkeit ahnrichten wollen oder nicht . . . Sie bitten Gott, dass sie unter der oberkeit in einem fridlichen stillen leben wonen mogen"; Pilgram Marbeck, *Vermanung* in *Gedenkschrift zum 500-jährigen Jubiläum* (Ludwigshafen, 1925) 280, "Wa aber oder wann der weltlich und zeitlich gewalt ettwas gebeutt wider Gott und die gewissen, das sie durch gedult darüber leiden biss in todt, das heysst Gott geben was Gottes ist, und dem keyser was des keysers ist"; for the report of an impartial observer cf. Sebastian Franck, *op. cit.*, ccccxlix, "Sie seien auch bereyt gewalt zuleiden, vnd auch den Tyrannen gehorsam zusein, weil Paulus Rom. xiii. da er die gehorsamme anzeucht, von der Heydnischen oberkeyt, als Calligula, Tiberio, vnnd Nerone rede, der man soll gehorsame leysten."

government or an office of government be truly Christian? Are the principles underlying the governmental office basically compatible with those principles of the Gospel which are imperative for every Christian? The Anabaptist answer to these three questions was an emphatic "No" in each instance.

It must not be assumed that this problem was a merely theoretical one for sixteenth-century Anabaptism. In the light of the socio-economic background of many of the early Anabaptists the statement seems justified that it was as pertinent a question as was the issue of nonparticipation in warfare. Men like Grebel, Manz, and Marbeck, to name only a few, did indeed have the necessary prerequisites to hold a government office.[64a]

The emphatic Anabaptist affirmation that no true Christian can participate in a government position, must be seen—in the light of its early existence and uncompromising representation—as one of the major points of the "Anabaptist Vision." One of the earliest testimonies about the faith of the Zürich Swiss Brethren, dated in the fall of 1525, calls attention to the Anabaptist belief that "alle die so gricht und rat besitzind, die megind nit Christen sin."[65] Sometime later the court sentence against Felix Manz states that Manz had "ouch für die warheit gelert . . . das dhein Christ dhein oberer sin."[66] These testimonies constitute a major rejection of the close identification of church and state so prevalent in Western Christendom since the Constantinian solution of the fourth century.

In a way this attitude implied a distinct devaluation of the office of government, which was especially serious in the light of the close co-operation between the Reformers and their respective governments. For many decades the charge persisted against the Anabaptists that they were unwilling to recognize the governmental office as a Christian vocation.[67] Many Anabaptist leaders, such as Felix Manz, had responded early to these charges, recognized their validity, but called attention to the basic justification for the Anabaptist position:

64 a The exhaustive list for the Swiss Anabaptists, as published by Paul Peachey in his doctoral dissertation, *Die soziale Herkunft der Schweizer Täufer* (Karlsruhe, 1954), shows conclusively the relative importance of "upper class" for the early Anabaptist movement. This study somewhat invalidates the remarks by Winfield Fretz, *Mennonite Life*, July 1956, 139.

65 *Quellen Zürich*, 123.

66 *Ibid.*, 225.

67 *Quellen* I, 149, "Von weltlicher oberkeit bekennen sie wol, dass sie von gott eingesetzt und geordnet, das ubel zu strafen, das sie aber ein christ sein könnde oder möge, geben sie nit zue"; *ibid.*, 175, Von weltilicher Obrigkeit halten sie . . . dass es kein christlicher Stand sei"; *Bernhard Wyss, Chronik*, ed. Georg Finsler (Basel, 1901) 79, "Vermeinten kein Christ möcht kein oberer sin und sollte man ouch niemandt tödten"; Johannes Kessler, *Sabbata*, ed. Ernst Goetzinger (St. Gall, 1870) 263, "Do entstund der ander artickel under inen, das sy uffbrachtend es mög kain weltlich obrigkeit christen sin oder kain christ mög ein oberer sin, dan die christen habend kainen gwalt anderst dann den ban oder usschliessen, von welchem Christus rede, Mathe. 18."

> das sin meynung allweg gewässen und noch sig, das dhein crist ein oberer sin und nit mit dem schwert richten noch jemans todenn noch straffen solt, dann *er darumb dhein geschrifft hette.*[68]

This position is confirmed numerously by other Anabaptist testimonies.[69]

Four major reasons are given for the Anabaptist position:

(1) There is in the Scriptures no evidence for a true Christian's participation in government.[70]

(2) The example of Christ himself speaks against participation. "Wenn der weltlich Gewalt und Obrigkeit Christen sein wöllen, So müsten Sie eigentlich die Natur und Art des Lebens Christi sich beweisen und halten."[71] Frequently the example is cited of how Christ fled when the crowd wanted to make him king.[72] If Christ is to be our example, said an Anabaptist spokesman at the Zofingen debate, we must follow His footsteps under the cross: Christ did not rule the people.[73] A classical exposition of the Anabaptist position is found in the Schleitheim Confession:

> Was Christus vnser haupt auff vnns gesinnet ist, das alles sollen die glieder dess leips Christi durch jn gesinnet sein, damit keyn spaltung

68 *Quellen Zürich,* 216.

69 *Ibid.,* 354, "Er geloube ouch nitt, das ein crist ein oberer solle sin": *Quellen* I. 179, "Er könne die Obrigkeit nicht als christlich anerkennen"; *ibid.,* 1062, "Denn die weltlich oberkait hat iren bestand ausser dem reich Christi und gottes"; *Quellen* IV, 530, "Zum vierden sagt er, dass alle oberkaiten, so heischen wellen und mit gwalt faren, heyden sygen"; *Codex Kunstbuch,* Bürgerbibliothek Bern 247 b, "Es zyme dem Christen nit ein Obrigkeit zu sein"; Johann Loserth, "Zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer in Mähren," *Zeitschrift für Allg. Geschichte,* 1884, 453, "Das ein weltliche Obrigkait nit mag ein crist sein"; *Aufdeckung,* D a, "Die waren Christen werden sich der freyhait (es seyn böss oder frum zubeherrschen vnd regiern) zu kainem gewalt oder Obrigkait nicht vnderstehen, sonder werden sich beherrschen regieren vnd bewältigen lassen inn der gedult vnd lieb biss zum ende der welt"; *Handlung oder Acta,* 90 b, "Das die obern ouch mogend Christen sin, darous manklet vns vn findt sich nit"; *Die Predigen so vonn den froembden Predicanten . . . Verwerffen der Artickienn vnd Stucken so die Widertouffer . . .* (Zürich, 1528) N viij b, "Hie sprachend etlich vnder jnen zu Bern, es möge kein Christ ein oberkeit sin, oder an der gwalt sitzen"; Hans Denck, *Von der wahren lieb* (n.p., 1526) b iiiii b. "Mit gwalt faren vnd herrschen ist gantz keynem Christen erlaubt, der sich seins Herrn berümen will."

70 Leonhard Dax, *op. cit.,* 31, "Dz wir aber die Obrigkeit fuer Christen Erkoenen sollen, dz wer uns ein Torlich Ding dieweil wie Paulus sagt: Rach Boten sindt, undt wie aus Hosea gehert aus Gottes ungnadt verordnet seindt, Christus aber aus Gnad von vater in die welt gesentt."

71 *Handbüchlein wider den Prozess* 9; *Handlung oder Acta, op. cit.,* 83 a, "Ouch sagt Christus selbs Joan. xv. Habend sy mich verfolget So werdend sy üch ouch verfolgen: das ist offenbare Kundtschafft das kein oberkeit vnder den Christen syn wirt."

72 *Handbüchlein, op. cit.,* 9. "Ja vielmehr da er merket dass Volk zu ihm kommen wolt und ihn erwischen, dass sie ihm zum König machten. Da entwich er"; Zieglschmid, *Chronik,* 477, "Wie das Christus da in das Volck Zum Künig machen wolt geflohen sy. Item das er nit Erbtailer sein wolt oder Richter da in ainer aus dem Volck bat darzu. Also sollen seine Nachfolger auch thuen"; *Aufdeckung,* C iij a, "Da jn das volck zum zeitlichen Künig machen wolt vmb jrer zeitlichen gutthaben willen so sy von jm empfangen hetten flohe er vnd wiche von inen. Johan. 6"; Jenny, *op. cit.,* 15, "Christus hat sollen gmacht werden zu einem künig, vnd er ist gffohen vnd hat nit angesehen die ordenung seines vatters; also sollen wir im auch tun vnd im nach laufen"; *"Handlung oder Acta." op, cit.,* 83 b. "Er floch Joan, am vj, do sy jn woltend vfwerffen zu einem wältlichen künig"; *Quellen* I, 354, "Da das volk Christo wolt zum künig machen, do floh er"; cf. also the statement by the Anabaptist speaker in Bullinger's *Von dem unverschämpten Frevel,* O ij, "so doch die wort vn das byspil Christi richtig darwider sind."

73 *Handlung oder Acta, op. cit.,* 83 b; cf. also *Quellen* I, 179, "Christus habe nie gelebt wie die Obrigkeit, die er als christlich anerkennen würde, wenn sie lebte wie Christus"; Jenny, *op. cit.,* 15, "Auch sagt Petrus: Christus hat gelitten, nit geherscht, vnd hat vns ein ebenbild gelassen, das jr solt nachfolgen seinen fusstapfen."

inn dem leip sei, dadurch er zerstört werde; dann eyn jeglichs reich, da in jm selbst zerteylt ist, wirt zerstört werden.[74]

(3) The command of Christ is plain in its rejection of participation in governmental offices. The *locus classicus* is Matthew 20:25-27.[75] This passage proved to the Anabaptists that there are two diametrically opposed principles in the world: governmental authority with its characteristic of power and lordship and the *imitatio Christi* which implies a *lijdszame* persecution by the world.[76] This is a contrast which cannot be bridged.[77]

The Reformers attempted to counter the Anabaptist charge with examples from the New Testament where Christians apparently had occupied governmental office.[78] The Anabaptist answered with the concession: "We grant and admit that those of whom you speak came to faith but do not find that they remained in the government" (Wir sagen ia, vnd lassend ouch zu, das die, wie jr erzelt, zum glouben

74 Jenny, *op. cit.*, 15; *Aufdeckung*, C iiij a, "Solt wol noch weyter oder gar von sollichen Propheten weichen so den gedultigen vnd liebhabenden Christum vnder gaistlichen schein mit dem weltlichen gewalt verheyraten wöllen"; cf. also a supplication of a group of Anabaptists printed in Cornelius Bergmann, *Die Täuferbewegung im Kanton Zürich* (Leipzig, 1916) 63, "Wenn die Obrigkeit den engen und schmalen Weg wandeln kann, das Kreuz auf sich nehmen, wer wolt ihnen ihr amt abschlagen." It is quite clear from these sources that the Anabaptist position was basically one of confronting the magistrate with the claims of Christ as this claim will inevitably compel any Christian to leave his governmental office. Any attempt, therefore, to combine Christ's principles with those of worldly government—which according to Anabaptist understanding could indeed be made— will have to end in failure: Cf. Hans Denck, *op. cit.*, B iiiij b, "Vnd so ferr es müglich were eyner Oberkeyt auch also zu handlen, so möcht sie wol auch Christlich in jrm stand sein, Die weil es aber ie die welt nit leiden mag, so sol vnd may eyn freund Gottes nit inn die Oberkeyt sonder drauss wachsen"; Zieglschmid, *Chronik*, 478, "Aber ein Obrigkait möge wol ein Christ werden So sie sich herab lass vnd die Obrigkait fluech wie Christus vnd allein vnderthon sey Zu gueten wercken wie die Apostel leeren."

75 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 232, "Item Matheus 20, Markus 10, schribent wie Jacobus vnnd Johannes zwenn der Jüngern dem Herrn christo anmutteten, meinten er wurde ein vsserlich rich vfrichtenn Nach der wyss der khüngen Judo, Söllte ein zur rechten den andern zur lincken lassen sitzen etc. jr wussent das die weltlichen fürsten beherrschennt die völlcker vnnd die Oberherren farent mitt gwalt, Abber vnnder üch das ist vnnder der gmeind gottes soll es nitt allso sind; *ibid.*, 249, "Moses hett das gesatz gefürtt vnnd wie er gestrafft ist recht gsin, der beuelch gottes, darinn wir noch nütt Sagennt ja vsserthalb dann jm nüwen Seitt Christus jr nitt allso"; *Handlung oder Acta*, 84 b, "Wir wend ymerdar das vnderscheyd sye zwüschend dem gewalt des wältlichen regiments, vn der Christlichen kilchen, vs denen worden Christi, da er spricht, Jr aber nit also"; *ibid.*, 89 a, "Diewyl der Herr mit heyteren worten gesagt Jr nit also. Daruss wir nit annderst könnend verstan, dann das es vnder den Apostlen vnd Christlicher gemeind des gwalts vnd regiments nit also sölle syn"; *ibid.*, 103, "Wie wir dz schwärdt wölt lend der wält lassen. Das aber jr sölliche Oberkeyt vnder dem volck Gottes wöllend habend wir darwider grund gleyt Matth. xx. Luce xviij, vnd Marci x. Aber vnder üch soll es nitt syn. Desshalb können wir es noch nit zulassen"; Zieglschmid, *op cit.*, 302, "Sich er füert die Obrigkait vnd Herrn der wellt sin, vnd spricht drucken, Also soll es nit sein vnd euch"; Joachim Watt, *op. cit*, 502, "Nun spricht Christus Luce 22. wie weltlichen künig beherschend die völker, vnd die gwaltigen heisst man gnädig herren; ir aber nit also . . . Hie wirt den glöubigen der gwalt abgestrickt"; *Quellen I*, 1064, "Das aber ir obrigkeit nit christen seit oder sein mögt in eurem ambt und dienst beweist Christus mit diesen worten, da er sagt: die weltlichen fürsten beherrschen die völker und die oberherren fahren mit gwalt, ir aber nit also." Franz Lau, *Luthers Lehre von den beiden Reichen* (Berlin, 1952) 29, has recently made the interesting statement that Luther rarely used this Scripture verse.

76 Ethelbert Stauffer has ably summarized the theological content of this Anabaptist concept, "Anabaptist Theology of Martyrdom," *MQR* XIX (1945) 179-214.

77 H. Schnell, *op. cit.*, 124, "Der Oberkeit gebürt zu herschen, aber einem Christen den Kelch zu trincken vnd zu leiden, darumb ist herschen vnd ein Christ sein zweyerley."

78 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 252, "Wer ist Joseph vnnd Nicodemus gsin, Sind Rattsherrn zu Jherusalem gsin, Lucas 23, Sind sy ouch christen gsin?"; Zieglschmid, *Chronik*, 487, "Da fiengen die pfaffen an, Es weren dennoch auch weltlich Obrigkait im hauss Christi, vnnd sagten vom Cornelio, er wer ein hauptmann gewesen, vnder dem Kriegsvolck vnd er sey ein Christ worden"; cf. also *Handlung oder Acta*, 91 a.

komen; das sy aber an der oberkeit bliben seyend, das manglet vns).[79] Thereby the Anabaptist understanding of the Scriptures denied the possibility of drawing conclusions from the New Testament regarding the later life of certain magistrates. Rather, they held, it should be inferred that these magistrates became disciples of Christ through their conversion and received new ethical principles. They became members of the body of Christ which is indivisible, of which one part cannot stand against another.[80]

Paul Glock, the Hutterite leader, employs such argumentation:[81] Cornelius and Sergius Paulus quite obviously had been preached the Gospel of Christ and accordingly had learned that they could not be rulers if they wanted to be disciples. "Aus dem allen vnd noch vil meren Haben Cornelius vnd Sergius Paulus, auch alle Christen wol leernen künnen, das sie nit mer weltliche Fürsten, Herren oder Vögt seind kündten, wolten sie anders Christi nachvolger werden."[82]

A fourth and final Anabaptist argument against participation in government focused on the radical distinction between the church of Christ and the world. Frequently reference is made to I Corinthians 5:12[83] to point out that the Christian has no responsibility for maintaining law and order in the "world."[84] The "world" is understood as *civitas diaboli*. It is diametrically opposed to the kingdom of Christ whose members are solely to be concerned with the earnest desire to follow Christ.[85] The true Christian does not have anything to do with the "world," except that the Great Commission is imperative for every Christian. The way the church is related to the world is through missionary effort.[86]

79 *Handlung oder Acta*, 91 b; *ibid.*, 103 b, "Das aber nit wyss vnd Oberen zum glouben kommind, sagint wir nitt: Aber das sy für vnnd für an der Oberkeyt blyben sind, das findend wir nit"; *ibid.*, 96 a, "Was jr von Nicodemo, Erasto, Paulo Sergio, vnd andern, wie die glöubig worden angezogen, habend jr doch nitt bewysst, das sy für vnd für in jrem stadt belyben syend"; Pilgram Marbeck, *Verantwortung*, 304, "Wer waiss, wie lang den Cornelium der h. geist und sein gewissen volgents, nachdem er zum christen ward, bei solcher hauptmannschaft hab bleiben lassen."

80 *Handlung oder Acta*, 92 a.

81 On Paul Glock cf. *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, vol. II.

82 Zieglschmid, *Chronik*, 488, "Aus dem allen vnd noch vil meren Haben Cornelius vnd Sergius Paulus, auch alle Christen wol lernen künnen, das sie nit mer weltliche Fürsten, Herren oder Vögt sein kündten, wolten sie anders Christi nachvolger werden."

83 "For what have I to judge them also that are without?"

84 *Codex Kunstbuch*, fol. 240, "Weil der paulus spricht, wz geen vns die dussens an . . . dj nit Christy willen thun, noch nach Inhalt des evangeliums jnn lieb, gedult vnnd andrer gehorsam wandlen"; Peter Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 330, "Wie Paulus sagt, Was gehn mich die daussigen ann, das ich sie richten solle," Hans Denck, *op. cit.* b iiij b, "Dann die daraussen sin (das sind die vnglaubigen) gehen die gemeyn Christi nichts an"; *Eine kurtze einfaltige erkanntnus*, 129, "Also leerend die apostell wol flyssig, das die Christen der Oberkaitt sollend vndethon syn, aber nitt das sy das wältlich schwärtt selber füren söllind, dann was gand mich die dussen an."

85 *Aufdeckung*, D a, "Lasst vns darumb sehen das wir Christen bleiben, leiden, vnd den sig des Lammes behalten zu Ehre vnsers Vaters vnd Christi."

86 Wilhelm Wiswedel's study "Die alten Täufergemeinden und ihr missionarisches Wirken," *Archiv f. Ref. Geschichte*, XL (1940) 197 ff., has called attention to the significant missionary activities of the early Anabaptists. It should be kept in mind, however, that evangelistic work was better possible for Anabaptism than for the Reformation which assumed that all baptized persons were members of the church and thus *eo ipso* outside the possibility of evangelism.

The implicit charge of the reformers that such a lack and absence of social responsibility would lead to a breakdown of the civil order was rejected by the Anabaptists. It was their contention that there would always be enough men willing to take over governmental offices.[87] The Anabaptist refusal to assume office should therefore be interpreted, they said, as having no direct bearing on public law and order.

One of the more poignant expositions of the Anabaptist position is found in the Schleitheim Confession. It acknowledges and accepts the state as "an order of God,"[88] but places it outside the "perfection of Christ." In this perfection of Christ the ban takes the place of the state authority. The Confession establishes a dualism of two distinct realities which are incompatible with each other. Both are equally valid within their respective realms, both have their principles and standards. The work and office of government are utterly necessary in the world, but they are not necessary for the Christian. On the other hand, the law of Christ is clear and absolute, but it has validity only in His church. An Anabaptist spokesman at the Bern disputation of 1538 remarked:

> Allso widersprechen wir nitt was vsserthalb dem christenthumb jn der welt ist, das die woll mögen Obern habenn, die Christen aber, werden sich nach dem Euangelium haltten vnnd flibenn.[89]

For the true Christian the power of government, they implied, is power in reserve. To employ a term of physical science, it is "potential energy" which needs not to be realized on account of the high standards of the true followers of Christ.[90] Scriptural command and pragmatic observation coincide in this point. Should gross sins occur within the Christian brotherhood—the reference to the ban in the Schleitheim Confession seemingly indicates that the Anabaptist posi-

87 *Aufdeckung*, D a, "Dörffen nicht sorgen vmb Obrigkait wir finden herrscher genug, lugen wir nur das wir Christen bleiben gedulden vn den syg des Lambs behalten."

88 Jenny, *op. cit.*, 14.

89 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 232; *Handlung oder Acta*, 78 b, "Wir hand gester geseyt, dz ein weltliche oberkeyt sin sölle zu straff vnd schirm sind wir och gneygt gehorsam zeseyn, darzu sy gesetzt so vil es sich gepürt vnnd es dem Euangelio glich vn gemäss ist. Die Christlichen kilch aber sol vnder jren selbs dz böss straffen nach ordnung des banns"; *ibid.*, 97, "Das wir nit mitzügen könend, das ein wältlich könend, das ein wältlich regiment vn das schwärt in der kilchen Gottes syn sölle, sagend wir nit"; Peter Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 414, "Denn ausser Christo hat der gewalt noch seinen bestand, zum gewissen anzeigen, das gottes zorn noch allweg für vnd für, wider die sünder vnd gotlosen weret"; *Regensburger Stadtarchiv*, "Ob wir wol der Obrigkeit für uns selb nit bedurfftend, da sy ist nit den frumen, sonder den bösen besetzt zufurchten."

90 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 239, "Die mentschenn aber die vss vorcht gottes grosse laster nit vnnderlassen, diebäry, mördery, oder annder laster, denen hett gott verordnet vnnd gesetzt Regenten, Oberkeitt, künig, Abder die Christen vnnderlassent diese bösse ding on das, darumb dörffent sy kheiner söllichen Oberkeitt"; a negative statement also in Zieglschmid, *Chronik*, 307, "Denn weil sich der gross hauff diser welt Gottes wort nit ziehen vnd regieren lasst, so muess sie das Schwert ziehen vnd regieren."

91 Jenny, *op. cit.*, 14.

tion was not one of perfectionism[91]—they are rightly punishable by governmental authority.[92]

Any discussion of the Scriptural statements on the Christian's relation to governmental power must of necessity refer back to the Old Testament. In the discussion between the Reformation and Anabaptism two aspects took on special emphasis: the historical interpretation of the role of government in the Old Testament, and the relation of such Old Testament teaching to the church of Christ.

The Anabaptists conceded that the Old Testament knows of an intimate relationship of governmental authority with God. "Das der fromme und Gott gefällige David ein König war, das ist unwidersprechlich."[93]

But while the Anabaptists concurred with the Reformers on one point, they emphatically disagreed on the second: "Unnd hilfft nit das du sagst, Dauid sey ein König gewesen, vnnd vil frome haben den gewalt des Schwerts vnnd Kriegs gefüert."[94] Many other Anabaptists repeat this point.[95] The coming of Christ has brought about a new situation.[96] This in turn challenges the Anabaptists to point out on numerous occasions the radical distinction between the Old and New Testaments as regards governmental authority. The writer of the Hutterite Chronicle says, "Dieweil nun das Jüdisch Regiment . . . in Christo enndet, auffhöret vnd von inen genumen wirt, So ist offenbar das es in Christo nit mer sein soll."[97] Wolfgang Brandhuber, another Anabaptist, admonished the brotherhood at Rattenberg am Inn in Austria: "Ir wollet aus Christo keinen mosen machen lassen als jetzt etliche komen, die das schwert erhalten wöllen vnd wöllen das ein Christ zum Tod urtailen vnd richten, das vns doch das gnädig lämblein nie gelert."[98]

92 Peter Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 413, "Sobald der mensch aber sich wider der sünden begibt, vnd vnrecht thut falt er in zorn vnd fluch, vnd wirt der oberkeit in jre hannd an jm gottes rach zu üben." Fritz Heyer's comment that the Anabaptists felt themselves free of all governmental authority, *op. cit.*, 89, is therefore not quite correct. Unfortunately Franklin Littell repeated this statement, *op. cit.*, 49.

93 *Handbüchlein wider den Prozess,* 10; *Aufdeckung,* B iij a, "Wiewohl sich hie der widertail der götlichen männer als Abraham, Jacob, Moise, David vnd dergleichen behelffen wöllen vn sagen, Sy habe auch den gaist Gotes gehept, vn das schwert gefürt wider die bosshafftigen, vn wer den gaist Gottes habe der hab auch den gaist Christi."

94 Zieglschmid, *op. cit.*, 303.

95 Cf. *Acta des Gesprächs,* 249, "Da were eins wider das ander, oder hett ouch Moses jnn sinder gmeind christglöubige Lütt gehept?" with the Anabaptist answer, "Ja sind glöubig gsin, Moses hett das ampt gefürrt das vfgehördt."

96 Joachim Watt, *op. cit.*, 502, "Dass aber im alten testament schwert und krieg und oberkeit Got zuglassen hat, wirt uns nit belangen noch binden, dan das gsatz ist ufgehept und ein nüw gebot von Christo geben, dass wir ouch unsere vigend lieben sollend, Matt. 5"; as regards freedom of conscience, *Regensburger Stadtarchiv,* "Dannob wir schon zuegäben das den Obrern in der glaichen zustraffen, lassen wir geschehen, die weil es knechtisch volck des gsetz ware, da alle genött mit schlegen zueging . . . yetzund aber diser freier predig des Euangelii Christi hat aller Zwang aufgehört."

97 Zieglschmid, *op. cit.*, 296, 299, "Was nun im Zorn geben ist, will sich in Christo dem Segen vnd gnad weder füegen noch schicken, vnd ouch des Segens oder Fridens kindt kan der Raach oder des Zorns dienner nit sein."

98 Lydia Müller, *op. cit.*, 139.

Peter Riedemann, the Hutterite leader, devoted considerable attention to the problem of the Old Testament. The serious questions regarding the basic unity of the Scriptures raised by the Anabaptist understanding is personified by him in the question: Is the Son against the Father? Thereby he expresses that in the final analysis man is confronted with two revelations of God.[99] Riedemann points out that behind apparent discrepancies there is a basic unity between the Old and the New Testament. Thus Christ does not abolish the office of human government,[100] even though Schleitheim says that He did not maintain the previous divine order (die Ordnung seines Vaters nicht achtete);[101] that is, He invalidated its significance within certain boundaries.

The Anabaptists rejected the necessity of defense against the attacks of an external foe.[102] They recalled the example of Christ to whose support Peter had wanted to come:

> Höre aber was Christus thet; den Petrus vmb leiblicher lieb Christi willen belaidiget vnd schlug, den machet der Herr auch leiblich wider gesund, Lu. 22., so gar wolt der Herr, auch noch nit will, kain hilffe noch lieb, dadurch andern beschedigt oder gehasst mögen werden, ja auch das wir vnser höchste feind nur lieben vnd nit hassen, Lu. 6., ob sy uns wol samentlich und sonderlich belaidigen.[103]

Attention should here be called to the fact that the Reformers thought in different categories. For Luther the ethical norms of behavior need not necessarily be taken from the Sermon on the Mount. The command to love one's enemy might conflict with the command to love one's neighbor and thereby become invalid. Luther knows of a greater responsibility to the neighbor than to the enemy.[104] The Anabaptists, on the other hand, understand Christ's command as equally valid to both neighbor and enemy. They do not find a Scriptural injunction which would designate the social order as a legitimate area of responsibility and entity of Christian ethics.

Anabaptist thinking does not attempt a synthesis which would combine the affirmation of government as a divinely instituted order with its rejection as a legitimate occupation for the true Christian. Such a synthesis would involve the concept of a general moral law

99 Peter Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 409, "Darumb muss sie auch in Christo bleiben, sunst wer der sun wider den vater"; *ibid.*, 410, "Darumb muss man nit so frech reden, das der sun darumb wider den Vater sei."

100 *Ibid.*, 409.

101 Jenny, *op. cit.*, 15.

102 *Aufdeckung*, B iij b, "Weytter schmuckt sich die aigennützigkeit mit der lieb des nechsten vnd sagt soll ich meine nechsten (so man jn verderben will) nit zu hilff komen so ichs wol vnderkomen mag dz sey ye ain yeder schuldig zuthun. Got hab es geboten wo ich meinen nechsten in nöten sehe jn nit zuerlassen dann was ich gern habe das sol ich auch wie Mat. 7 eine andern thun."

103 *Ibid.*, B iij b.

104 Karl Holl, *Luther's Stellung zum Krieg* (Tübingen, 1928) has given a full analysis of Luther's position.

which would reject the exercise of power, such as war and bloodshed, even within the civil order. Therefore a basic paradox remains unsolved in Anabaptist thinking. One can safely say that the Anabaptists were not unaware of this fact, but accepted it as a basic truth of the Scripture over which they had no control, and which they could accept only in faith. Paul Glock put the ultimate Anabaptist answer into these words:

> Weil euch obrigkeit und gewalt so wunder nimbt, das ir von gott geordnet und eingesetzt seit und solt doch verdampt und nit selig werden in eurem ambt . . . Ja lieber mensch, wer bistu, der mit Gott zanken will? Sagt auch ein werk zu dem, der es macht, warumb machestu mich also? . . . was ist es dann, ob schon gott, als er wolt zorn erzaigen und sein macht kund tuen, mit grosser gedult herfür bracht die geschür des zorns.[105]

THE MINORITY WITHIN THE MINORITY

Aside from the numerous testimonies which agree in an emphatic rejection of the Christian's participation in a governmental office, there is evidence in the sources of another small stream of Anabaptist thinking which apparently accepted the entire political ethics of the Reformation and yet considered itself a genuine expression of the Anabaptist movement. The entire matter of the Christian's relation to the state is obviously considered secondary. This is brought out by Hans Nadler:

> Und auch der bruder vil unter uns, die wollen, mir solten die schwerter und wer gar hinlegen das hab ich getan, es ist aber doch kein sazung nit, es mags einer dragen aber mags lassen, darnach er stark oder schwag ist im glauben.[106]

The most outstanding representative of this group is Balthasar Hubmaier,[107] but there are other testimonies from the entire South German area, such as Zürich, Hesse, Baden.[107a] This geographical heterogeneity is also brought out by a detailed study of the content. There is evident a wide variety of conviction: Hubmaier's adoption of the political ethics of the Reformers appears alongside the intermediary position of Jacob Gross, who refused to bear arms but consented to do guard duty at the city walls. Chronologically the same variation applies, as the known sources come from the beginning

105 *Quellen* I, 1062.

106 *Quellen* II, 136.

107 The best discussion of Hubmaier's view of the state is given by Carl Sachsse, *Balthasar Hubmaier als Theologe* (Berlin, 1913) 210 ff.

107a *Quellen Zürich*, 334, "Er lasst aber nach, das ein cristenman ein oberer sin mög"; *Quellen* IV, 356, "Vff den 9. articul ob ain furst oder amptmann sein vnnd also weltliche oberkhait walten anntwurt er: Ja, wann ain furst oder amptmann thue was ime von gott beuolhenn vnnd leb der leer Christi nach, mög er wol ain guter christ sein vnnd darbey regieren"; *Quellen Hessen*, 75, "Ein christ kunde wol ein oberkeit sein und ein christ kunde wol under oberkeit geleben."

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period of the Anabaptist movement as well as from the latter half of the sixteenth century.

One of the significant expressions of this minority group is the *Verantwortung und widerlegung der artikel,* which in close parallel to Luther describes the right attitude of the Christian to the state: "So nu ein christ von der oberkeit gefordert die bösen strafen hilft, hat er nit zu einem bösen, sonder zu einem guten werk geholfen und sein glidmaiss zum waffen der gerechtigkeit begeben."[108]

Recent scholarship has advanced the thesis of a different view of the state between the South German and Swiss Anabaptists.[109] The evidence of this minority position even among the Swiss Anabaptists makes it clear that such a distinction is unlikely.

Attention should also be called to the fact that in many instances where seemingly the possibility of occupying a government office is not denied, the command of Christ is at the same time understood so radically that it in effect implies a rejection. It seems as if the Anabaptist spokesmen were at times led by the desire to soften the nature of their position which expressed itself occasionally in a none-too-clear terminology. A government which does not resist evil, does not use the sword against the evildoers, has given up basic elements of its office. This is aptly summarized by an Anabaptist supplication of 1588:

> Wollte die Obrigkeit den engen und schmalen Weg wandeln, das Kreuz auf sich nehmen, wer wollte ihnen ihr Amt abschlagen? Sie aber ist ein irdischer Herr . . . der von amts wegen dichten und trachten muss, was zur Mehrung seines Reichs und Erden dient, mit irdischer Gewalt und Macht den Frommen schützen und den Bösen strafen. Deshalb sei Christ sein und Obrigkeit sein und das weltlich Schwert zuwider.[110]

The two important conclusions which the evidence of a deviating minority group within the Anabaptist movement suggests is that there are two positions aside from the major position treated in this present paper. They run in chronological parallel and are not to be construed as a later softening of the radical position. One stream,

108 *Quellen Hessen,* 165 ff.

109 Jan J. Kiwiet, *Pilgram Marbeck, Sein Kreis und seine Theologie* (dissertation Zürich, 1955) 154. Kiwiet advances the thesis of a separate group of (Marbeck) Anabaptism in South Germany which held—among other doctrinal differences—the view that a true Christian could exercise governmental authority. For support he quotes a single statement of Marbeck's *Verantwortung,* 304, ". . . es einem Christen schwer sey, ein weltlich oberer ze sein." While it must be admitted that the sentence quoted is not entirely clear in its meaning the immediate context of the quote makes Marbeck's indication quite clear, and does not support Kiwiet's interpretation, cf. supra, 79; cf. also "Rechenschafft," in *MQR* XII (1938) 197, "Wann aber solh personnen, do die obrigkhait tragen, Christi sind, oder werden (so Ich Inen von hertzen winsch vnd pitt) mugen sy sich, solhs hienersteenden leiblichen gewaltts, herschung noch Regierung, im Reich crissti nit geprauchten, mag auch durch kain schrifft erhallten werden"; *Vermanung* 216, "So bedarff auch keyn warhafftiger christ, weder stätt, land noch hütt (als jrrdische heren) einnehmen, beschutzen noch mit gewalt faren."

110 Cornelius Bergmann, *op. cit.,* 61.

represented by Hubmaier, accepts in full the political ethics of the Reformation, whereas a second stream attempts a synthesis between the Reformation and Anabaptism.

Though one is inclined to suspect the existence of Anabaptist congregations which held such views there is no evidence at hand which would support such a thesis. With the exception of Hubmaier's congregation there is only an *Abred der Diener und Eltesten* as a general doctrinal statement standing representative for a larger group, aside from the *Verantwortung*.[111]

PARTICIPATION IN WAR

One of the fascinating aspects of the 16th century is the widespread interest in the problem of war.[112] No doubt this was largely due to the oppressive onslaught of the Turks, who periodically stood outside Vienna and threatened to overrun Western Christendom.[113] It is also due to the general re-evaluation of basic Christian teaching and principles prevalent in that time. It is well known that Luther wrote repeatedly on the question. Zwingli at times was a pacifist. So was Erasmus of Rotterdam and a host of other humanists and spiritualists.[114] The early Anabaptists were, therefore, by no means the only group of the Reformation which held a negative attitude toward war, although their position was recognized by well-meaning observers, such as Sebastian Franck and Wolfgang Capito.[115] In the attitude toward war the position of Anabaptism with respect to the state seems most clearly expressed. Thieleman J. v. Braght's *Martyrs' Mirror* refers to the Anabaptists as the "defenseless" Christians.[116] As late as 1574 it was remarked in a court trial that a certain person could not possibly be an Anabaptist, because he took part in war and legal procedures (*er zere mit und ziehe hinaus und sei vor gericht ein fürsprech, ratsmann oder entenmaier*).[117] Again one can call atten-

111 Ernst Müller, *Geschichte der Bernischen Täufer* (Frauenfeld, 1895) 51; *Quellen Zürich*, 109, brings the testimony of Jacob Gross from the first years of the movement, "Uff habint si sich schlechtlich nit wellen weren, och kein gwer tragen, aber wachen."

112 There is as yet no comprehensive study of pacifist thought in the sixteenth century. Valuable studies are Christian Lange, *Histoire de la doctrine pacifique* (Paris, 1927), and Inez Thürlemann, *Erasmus und Ludovicus Vives als Pazifisten* (dissertation Freiburg, 1932).

113 A similar situation arose approximately a century later, when the turmoil of the Thirty Years' War encouraged pacifist thinking such as represented by Christian Hoburg, Paul Felgenhauser, Joachim Bethge, etc.

114 Thürlemann, *Erasmus von Rotterdam;* J. Kvacala, *Deux pacifistes catholiques aux temps de reforme* (Paris, 1928), Walter Köhler, "Ulrich Zwingli und der Krieg," *Christliche Welt* XXIX (1915); Kurt Goldammer, "Friedensidee und Toleranzgedanke bei Paracelsus," *Archiv f. Ref. Geschichte* XLVI (1955).

115 *Basel Stadtarchiv*, M. K. A. 23 a, fol. 1, "Man wollte dann für gottslesterung achten, das die armen leut fürgenommen haben zu meiden das . . . kriegen," Sebastian Franck, *op. cit.*, ccclxxxix, "Der meinung seind auch etliche auss den Tüffern, das kein Christ kriegen mög."

116 Tieleman J. van Braght, *The Bloody Theatre or Martyrs' Mirror* (Scottdale 1951) 1.

117 *Quellen* I, 429.

tion to many Anabaptist statements which point out that a true Christian cannot go to war. Bullinger quotes some Anabaptists as saying

> dass die Christen nit söllend gegen jren hasseren vnd widersträbern sich noch jren glouben oder Euangelio mit wältlichen fleischlichen gwalt schwärdt, waaffen oder gegenweer schützen noch vertädingen, anderst dann durch das wort Gottes.[118]

The basis for the Anabaptist position on war is the example and command of Christ. He is the prince of peace who abolishes in His kingdom the power of the sword and war.[119] All the elements of the office of government, which to the Anabaptists indicated that a true Christian may have nothing to do with that office, are brought into focus again in this question. The principles involved in war on the one hand and in being a true disciple of Christ on the other hand are basically incompatible.[120]

The first Anabaptist testimony against participation in war is found in Conrad Grebel's letter to Thomas Müntzer of September 1524: "Man soll ouch das evangelium und sine annemer nit schirmen mit dem schwert oder sy sich selbs. . . . Sy gebruchend ouch weder weltlichs schwert noch krieg, dann by inen ist das tötten gar abgetan."[121] The argumentation of this letter is, surprisingly enough, not based on specific Scripture passages, but affirms the position of the Swiss Brethren group by referring to general principles which, though based on the Scriptures, have already been synthesized to a consistent structure. The origin of such Anabaptist nonresistance still deserves extensive study; most probably it developed in close parallel to the other Anabaptist beliefs.[121a]

Similar to the Anabaptist understanding of the Old Testament view of governmental authority, it is held that in regard to war, too, a new aeon has come. The Reformation charge that "the saints also warred and protected their laws, religion, and faith and say that David and others also warred" is countered by Jacob Hutter with the comment "at that time the times required it and the Lord also commanded them to hate and exterminate their enemies" (*dazumal die zeit auf ir trueg, und es inen auch der Herr bevalch, ire feind zu hassen und auszureuten*).[122]

118 *Verantwortung etlicher die man töuffer mennt,* in Heinrich Bullinger's *Der Wiedertöufferen ursprung,* 237.

119 Riedemann, *op. cit.,* "Dieweil nun Christus der fridefürst jm ein reich das ist gmein bereitet, vnd durch sein eigen blut erworben hat, so endet in demselbigen reich, alles weltliche kriegen . . . Derhalben ein Christ weder krieg noch weltlich schwert (raach zu üben) füret."

120 Cf. the reaction of an Anabaptist to the Schmalcaldic War, Johann Adam ed., *Quellen Elsass* (microfilm in Goshen Historical Library), "Wie es christenlich zugangen, das hat man wol gesehen, seinen eben so bös gewesen, als die andern."

121 Von Muralt, *op. cit.,* 17.

121a It should be clear from the above that I am hesitant to concede any close dependence of the Swiss Brethren on Erasmus and Humanism in the matter of nonparticipation in warfare; the similarities are significant, but do not go far enough to justify the assumption of an intimate link. I have attempted a more detailed analysis in my dissertation.

122 Lydia Müller, *op. cit.,* 186.

The Anabaptist sources remain silent on the significant problem as to whether a country can legitimately engage in armed conflicts.[123] The Anabaptists seemingly were concerned with the more existential question whether a true Christian can participate in war. This leads to the significant problem of the uniqueness of the Anabaptist position.[124] Especially in the light of the supposed dependence on Erasmus this problem is important. While Erasmus and other humanists or spiritualist pacifists were essentially concerned about the general problem of war and its impact on society at large, the Anabaptist position is characterized by the dualist character which rejects participation in war basically only for the disciple of Christ.

THE SWEARING OF OATHS

The conflict between the Reformation and the Anabaptists in the area of political ethics focused attention, almost naturally, also on the problem of the oath. Contrary to the question of nonparticipation in war, where due to the absence of universal conscription in the sixteenth century the Anabaptist position remained largely a theoretical one, the problem of the oath was real and pertinent. In numerous examinations[125] and disputations[126] state and church inquired about the Anabaptist position, while the Anabaptists themselves set clearly forth their rejection of the oath in their own confessions.[127]

The basis for the Anabaptist position is the order of the Old Testament. The Anabaptists do not deny that God allowed the oath as an affirmation of truth in the Old Testament.[128] God is truth and therefore He desires that truth shall reign even among His people. God requires the oath as His answer to human untruthfulness. This

123 An indirect reference is given by Marbeck, *Verantwortung*, 217, "So bedarff auch keyn warhafftiger christ, weder stätt, land noch leüt einnemmen . . . dann solches gehört den jrrdischen und zeitlichen beherschern zu."

124 This is especially significant as Heinold Fast, "The Dependence of the First Anabaptists on Luther, Erasmus, and Zwingli," *MQR* XXX (1956) 104 ff., has described the pacifism of Erasmus as both christocentric and—at least at times—absolute.

125 *Quellen Hessen*, 263, "Ob er m.g.h. sein huldigungseid getan sagt: nein, er wolle inen auch nit tun"; R. Steck, *op. cit.*, 289, "Damit der oberkeyt by den underthanen die gehorsam genommen, sagten sy, das man der oberkeyt dheinen eyd schweren solte"; *Quellen* I, 149, "Beschweren sich ouch deshalb den aid zu tuen in ansehen, das Christus sagt . . ."

126 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 199, "Eyd Schwerenn, Ob ein Christ ein Rechtgeschaffnen warenn Eyd thun möge"; *Acta oder Handlung*, 106, "Eidschweeren"; Joachim Watt, *op. cit.*, 460, "Zum driten waiss ich aigentlich dass sie aid ze schweren verbietend und sölichs kainem zulassend, der ain christ sin wil, on angesechen, was in sölichenn val die eer Gotes oder liebe des nächsten erfordere."

127 *Quellen* I, 144, "Der Widertöufer sagte, man soll keinen Eid schwören," *ibid.*, 179, "Kein Christ könne mit gutem Gewissen zur Bestätigung der Wahrheit einen Eid schwören"; *Quellen* IV, 193, "Da verharren die wiederteufer auf ihrer meinung, dass gänzlich kein eid zutun sei"; *ibid*, 327, "Wir handt gott verheissen aller dingen nit zu schwere"; *ibid.*, 379, "Ich hab meinem herren von Fulda keinen Eid und pflicht getan"; *ibid.*, 74, "Gott hab das schweren verbotten"; *ibid.*, 74, "Er hab inn der Huldigung nit geschworen, still gestandenn vnd geschwigen. Gott sage, wehr schwer, der thüe Vnrecht"; *Quellen Zürich*, 319, "Es sol ouch niemen gar nütt schwern, weder eid noch anders."

128 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 199, "jst jnen botten wordenn wann sy sein wahrheit sagenn, das sy söllen vnnd mögen by dem Namen gottes Schwerenn."

in turn parallels the Anabaptist understanding of the order of human government which also represents itself basically as God's answer to human sin and need. The Old Testament oath is God's command to absolute truthfulness.[129] As truth is only with God such an oath can only be sworn in the name of God.[130]

This Old Testament order, however, has lost its validity for the disciples of Christ. "Aber eidschweren si nit billich. Dan wiewol das gsatz Mosi sölichs zugeben, so welle doch Çhristus ain anders; denselben aber hab Gott, der himelisch vater, haissen hören, und nit Mosen."[131] Christ's command stands therefore in the center of the Anabaptist argumentation. The reason we do not believe in the oath, says an Anabaptist spokesman at the Bern disputation of 1538, is that Christ has told us so.[132] The Schleitheim Confession, which defines the oath as a "confirmation among those who quarrel," and thereby places it outside the kingdom of Christ, refers to Christ, "who taught the perfection of the law" and prohibits all swearing.[133]

A second basis for the Anabaptist argumentation is somewhat independent of the example and command of Christ. It argues anthropologically with its emphasis on human weakness and deficiency which, of course, is greatly determined by a definite Scriptural understanding of man's nature. Human weakness stands in distinct contrast to the emphasis on one's own strength, which the oath implies. Man can do neither large nor small things in his own power.[134] The oath therefore detracts from God's honor, since it affirms an act of man which he cannot perform without the help of God.[135]

The typical dualism of the Anabaptist position regarding the role of government and participation in warfare recurs in the matter of the oath: the distinction between the "world" and the "church of Christ" makes clear that the oath has only become invalid within the church. The high principles of the true Christian make a further affirmation of his words as unnecessary as the actual use of govern-

129 Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 336, "Den gott der die warheit ist. Wil sein volck Israel leren . . . das sy alle jrer reden warnemen vnd achthaben sollen."

130 *Ibid.*, 396, "Darumb in dem als er jne verbeut, bei den götzen der heiden zu schweren, do will er jnen alle lug vnd vnwarheit, vnd eitels geschwetz verbotten haben."

131 Joachim Watt, *op. cit.*, 468.

132 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 199. *Handlung oder Acta*, 107 b, "Wil ich vrsache darthun was vnns zu söllichem bewegt hat vass den worten Christi Matth. v. als er oben anzaigt vnd entscheidet die hänndel des alten Testaments . . . . Das ist yetz die ursach das wir vns niemands vnderwerffen mit eydspflichts"; *Quellen* I, 375, "Eidschwören sei von Christus verboten."

133 Jenny, *op, cit.*, 114.

134 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 203, "Dann wir nitt vermögent ob wir Etwas verheissent, das so war gott lebt zethund, dasselb zehallttten. dann vnnser kheiner kann Ein einigs har vf sinem houpt wys oder Schwartz machen"; *Quellen Zürich* 335, "Dieweil Cristus heidter gesagt, üwere wort söllen syn ja, nein, unnd dann wir nützig von unns selbs vermögen oder haben, sunder thür erkoufft synnd. . . ." Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 398, "das wir aus vnsere eigne krefften weder das kleine noch das grosse vermögen, on was gott inn vnns thut."

135 *Ibid.*, 398, "Wer nun schweret diss oder jhenes zuthun, der greifft got in seine Eer vnd raubet Got was sein ist, den er greifft got. den er schweret diss zuthun, so er doch nichts vermag, vnd darzu nit weiss obs auch got in jm thun wölle."

mental power. In the "world" the oath is as necessary as is government.[136] It thereby becomes—again in parallel to the office of government—a means of making relative peace and order.[137] The command to absolute truthfulness remains unchanged: "Es soll sich auch niemands mit Ja oder Nein übereilen, dieweils nun Erlaubtnus ist: dann wer jemands mit Ja gantz vergewissen und versichern will, der hat schon geschworen."[138]

In another respect the Anabaptists have somehow pointed out the dilemma of the modern oath in a secularized society—for the Anabaptists the society even of the 16th century was secularized. Any religious oath presupposes the existence of an objective means of evaluation. God is to interfere with a false oath. Else there is little justification for using God as witness. The modern dilemma arises because the loss of eternal salvation may not always be significant to secularized man. The 16th century Anabaptists were unique in their belief that God is not immanent in the world in the way that the oath presupposes. Since there is no objective means to verify an oath, there is no legitimate reason for the oath.[138a]

Thus the Anabaptist argumentation is twofold. It argues the impossibility of the oath due to scriptural commands, human weakness, and absence of objective validation. But it also concedes that the world may use it as it may be a means of relative peace.

SUMMARY

A brief summary must attempt to relate the major findings of this paper to the context not only of the Reformation but the history of Christian thought throughout the centuries. On the basis of the evidence at hand it becomes imperative to view the Anabaptist position in regard to the state as the deliberate outcome of a thorough, systematic and basically consistent understanding of the Scriptures. We go amiss when we consider this position as the more or less inci-

136 *Quellen Hessen,* 395, "Er wisse dem fursten nicht zu verdenken, das ehr von seinere untertanen eid und pflicht nehme, Er wehre wol gut, das sie ihm gehorsamer und fromer wehren, ehr aber wolle keinen eid tun, man werde ihn einen christen bei nein und ja lassen"; *Acta des Gesprächs,* 206, "Ich weiss woll das die wellt, vnnd chisten von einandern vnnderscheidenn vnnd ob woll die mitt dem eyd binden muss, Schwerent, hallttten Sy es dennocht khum, Jch sag aber von den christen, dennen hatt christus gesagt, jr söllent aller dingen nit Schweren."

137 *Ibid.,* 216, "Aber vsserhalb diennett er woll zu fryd vnnd Ruwenn wo vsserhalb zänckische ding Sind, mag der eyd das vfhebenn, das bedarf es aber by den Christen nit." This similarity was well expressed by Hans Denck, *Von der wahren Liebe* (Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte XXIV, Gütersloh, 1956), 83, "Aus disem mag leicht ermessen werden, wie es stehe numb . . . schweren oder geloben, uber die bösen herrschen und dergleichen, nemlich die Gott umb bessers willen bei der welt gduldet . . . aber bie denen, so die warheyt erkennen oder vermessen sich, alss ob sie es erkennen, lasset er sie anders nitt geschehen." Hut's treatise includes a concise summary of the Anabaptist position as outlined here. His famous "widerruff," *op. cit.,* 110, "Von dem eyd," does not renounce this view.

138 Ludwig Schwabe, "Ueber Hans Denck," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte,* XII (1891) 461.

138a Otto Bauernfeind, *Eid und Friede* (Stuttgart, 1956), is the attempt at a re-evaluation of the Christian basis for the oath with a thorough analysis of the modern dilemma.

dental byproduct of a Biblical naiveté which is not aware of the complexities of social life. This does not mean, however, that all the Anabaptists of the 16th century were aware of the full implications of the problem or had fully comprehended the basic structure of the Anabaptist concept. In fact, there is enough evidence to point to the contrary.[139] But this fact, which could be applied with equal strength to the other great movements of the Reformation, does not alter the basic insight of a few who, it may well be said, succeeded in reformulating what might be called a basic Christian answer to the problem of human government. It also should be pointed out that the Anabaptist position does not imply a simple yielding to circumstances, that is an *ex post facto* justification for what was beyond their practical reach in the first place.

The first major significance of this Anabaptist view of the state is found in the resolute rejection of the *Corpus Christianum* concept which neither Luther nor Zwingli found possible to do away with.[140] John Horsch first called attention to the fact that the first break between the Grebel group and Zwingli occurred over the issue of a "state-church system" in Zürich.[141] While this view was emphatically challenged by two distinguished European scholars,[142] Köhler and von Muralt, it must stand basically proved: Grebel and his associates objected to the numerical identity of church and state which indeed existed in Zürich, where state and church worked together in many matters.[143] Zwingli, on the other hand, felt that the City Council of Zürich should have a word to speak and should determine, in the final analysis, the course of the Reformation in Zürich. The emphatic Anabaptist rejection of such a union, the insistence that a true Christian could not have anything to do with the governmental order, that the church which is composed of voluntarily dedicated believers, and the state, are two distinct entities and not numerically identical—all this vindicates over a thousand years of Western civilization and opened a new era of separation of state and church.[144]

A second significance seems to lie in the particular understanding of the Scriptures which underlies the Anabaptist view of the state.

139 The wide range of belief which becomes evident through a study of the *Täuferakten* seems to substantiate this feeling.

140 Two recent studies are Brigitte Brockelmann, *Das Corpus Christianum bei Zwingli* (Breslau, 1938), and Kurt Matthes, *Das Corpus Christianum bei Luther im Lichte seiner Erforschung* (Berlin, 1929).

141 John Horsch, "The Rise and Early History of the Swiss Brethren Church," *MQR* VI (1932) 169 ff.

142 Leonhard von Muralt, "Zum Problem: Täufertum und Reformation," *Zwingliana*, VI (1934) 65 ff.; Walther Köhler, "Das Täufertum in der neueren kirchenhistorischen Forschung," *Archiv f. Ref. Geschichte* XXXVIII (1940) 101 ff.

143 The Anabaptist Marx Bosshard put this into the words, "Meine Herren sehen dem Zwingli durch die Finger und der Zwingli meinen Herren," Emil Egli, *Die Züricher Wiedertäufer* (Zürich, 1872) 97.

144 Walther Köhler, *Dogmengeschichte* (Zürich, 1951) 86.

As was pointed out above, the conflict between the Anabaptists and the Reformers had to lead quite obviously to the problem of the government in the Old Testament. This in turn inevitably raised the question of the validity of the Old Testament *post Christum*. It is not at all surprising that we encounter in Anabaptist discussions of the state frequent references to the problem of rightly understanding the Old Testament.[145] Vice versa, in Anabaptist discussions of the nature of the Old Testament the issue of governmental authority is frequently used as reference.[146] In the Frankenthal disputation an Anabaptist stated that they had been asked to cite an illustration which contradicted Moses and the Prophets, and he replied that Moses drew the sword, but Christ taught to put away the sword and to love one's enemy.

The Anabaptist view of the state, more so than any other realization of the "Anabaptist Vision," suggests an understanding of the Scriptures that might aptly be termed as a New Testament monism. This understanding relates the Old Testament to the Gospel of Christ in a way which was unknown to the Reformers.[147]

That the New Testament monism possesses such significance is further borne out by a comparison with Luther. Luther's ethical emphasis on the Old Testament has been pointed out by such scholars as Troeltsch, Meinecke, and Wünsch, though it has not remained uncontested by Holl.[148] It is known that Luther saw nothing wrong in a Christian's participation in warfare. The justification for this can certainly not be sought in a painful compromise between the high law of Christ and the low standards of the world for which Luther felt responsible. The answer lies rather in the fact that Luther found in the Old Testament another stream of Biblical teaching which he considered of equal validity.[149]

Finally attention must be called to the Anabaptist dualism between the Kingdom of Christ and the "world." The Anabaptist concept of justification, the view of the church, and their understanding of governmental authority combine to form a radical protest against the medieval synthesis of the kingdom of Christ and the world.[150]

145 Riedemann, *op. cit.*, 324 ff.

146 Cf. *Frankenthaler Religionsgespräch*, 18, "Wir sollen etwas fürbringen, so Moses vnd die Propheten gelehret haben, dass der Lehr Christi zuwider: Nun zuckt Moses das Schwert, vnnd übet Rach, Christus heisset das Schwerd einstecken, vnd den Feind liebehaben."

147 *Frankenthal, op. cit.*, 13, "Wie vil nun auss dem alten Testament mag bewisen werden, dass der Lehr Christi nit zuwider, Nemen wir glaubwidrig an."

148 Ernst Troeltsch, *Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (Tübingen, 1912) 494 ff; George Wünsch, *Die Bergpredigt bei Luther* (Tübingen, 1920); Friedrich Meinecke, "Luther über christliches Gemeinwesen," in *Historische Zeitschrift* CXXI (1919) 22; an opposing view was held by Karl Holl, *Der Neubau der Sittlichkeit* (Tübingen, 1925).

149 *Weimarer Ausgabe*, 18, 81, 8-17; cf. also 30, 23; 225, 24.

150 *Acta des Gesprächs*, 211, "Wir wüssent woll wie ein vnderscheid ist zwüschen Tag vnnd nacht, liecht vnnd vinster, Also ist ein vnnderscheid zwüschent der wellt, vnnd Christen."

The "world" takes on almost sociological and geographical dimensions and does not fall—as with Luther—into the inside of the Christian individual with the *simul justus, simul peccator* doctrine. Or, to use Augustine's terminology, the *civitas terrenæ* becomes *civitas diaboli.*[151]

Walther Köhler's insistence that the essence of the Anabaptist movement should be seen within the context of the struggle between Christianity and culture[152]—or the ethic of culture versus the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount—should receive further attention, even though it may fail to reach the core of the Anabaptist genius. It is certainly evident that the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century can hardly be understood without adequate consideration of its radical rejection of the existing contemporary environing culture.

It has been said that it was the unfortunate fate of the 16th century Anabaptists to have entered history 400 years too early. The study of the Anabaptist view of the state seems to prove this statement. The separation of church and state, the concept of religious freedom, nonparticipation in armed conflict are issues which the prevalent climate of contemporary modern opinion views in a different light.

151 Robert Friedmann's "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds" in *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* points in this direction and deserves further study and attention by Anabaptist scholarship.

152 Walther Köhler, *Dogmengeschichte,* 86; *Corpus Reformatorum,* XCL, 161.

EDITORIAL

(Continued from page 82)

"Christian Responsibility to the State." The paper is marked by a keen analysis of the issues, a full awareness of the problem, and clarity of expression, but most of all by a deep sense of responsibility to the Christian commitment under Christ. There is something to be said for a still more radical position than that taken by Neufeld, but the implicit meaning of his conclusions must be quite radical.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO THE RADICAL CONTINENTAL REFORMATION [1]

James Leo Garrett*

Franklin H. Littell's *The Anabaptist View of the Church* (1952) is the most thorough delineation of that trend in contemporary scholarship which finds the essence of Anabaptism in its concept of the church. In particular, Littell interprets the Anabaptist movement from the focal point of the fall and restitution of the true church. Although his volume contains references to the Spiritualists and Anti-Trinitarians, these are to an extent outside the scope of its subject matter.[2] Furthermore, Littell's primary purpose is not the exposition of Anabaptist ecclesiology, but rather the interpretation of Anabaptism from the standpoint of its historically and apologetically oriented doctrine of the true church (*die rechte Kirche*).[3] Littell's work should stimulate further studies of the ecclesiology of the entire "radical" wing of the sixteenth century Reformation. This essay is a preliminary attempt to mark out some of the areas which call for additional study and which are of significance for the understanding of the church in the twentieth century. First, the question will be raised as to what, if anything, the Anabaptists, the Spiritualists, and the Anti-Trinitarians had in common in their understanding of the Christian church. Secondly, an effort will be made to demarcate some distinct concepts of the church. These ecclesiological types are construed, not from the total theology of their advocates, but, so far as possible, from the concept of the nature of the church alone. Finally, the nature of the church will be further examined by reference to the basic affirmations made and analogies applied to the church. Here primary, though not exclusive, attention will be given to the Anabaptists.

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1 This essay is an effort to restate on the basis of the sources the concepts of the nature of the Christian church which were set forth in the radical wing of the Reformation on the continent of Europe during the period from 1521 to 1575. Since discussions concerning the church today are legion and since the "left-wing" of the Reformation, long neglected and misinterpreted, is now being given serious study by competent scholars, it may be said that this essay is concerned with the juncture of these two contemporary trends.

The term "Radical Reformation," employed by George H. Williams, ed., *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers,* "Library of Christian Classics," vol. XXV (Philadelphia, 1957) 19-22, is used in this essay in preference to the term "left-wing" Reformation, used by John T. McNeill, "Left Wing Religious Movements" in *A Short History of Christianity,* ed. by Archibald G. Baker (Chicago, 1940) 127-32, and by Roland H. Bainton, "The Left Wing of the Reformation," *Journal of Religion,* XXI (1941) 124-34. The application of "left" to this phase of the Reformation was not inaugurated by McNeill and Bainton, for Thomas Armitage in his *A History of the Baptists* (New York, 1887), p. 399, quoted an article on "Anabaptists" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as follows: "Anabaptism, as a system, may be defined as the Reformation doctrine, carried to its utmost limit; the Anabaptists were the extreme left of the army of the Reformation." *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers* hereafter cited as *SAW.*

2 On the Spiritualists, cf. Littell, *op. cit.,* especially pp. 34-39, and on the Anti-Trinitarians, especially pp. 62 f. Cf. Littell, "Spiritualizers, Anabaptists and the Church," *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XXIX (January, 1955) 34-43. Hereafter cited as *MQR.*

3 Anabaptist concepts and usage would seem to make *die rechte Gemeinde* preferable to *die rechte Kirche.*

I.

THE COMMON DENOMINATOR: THE FALL OF THE TRUE CHURCH

The religious climate of sixteenth century western Europe, in which Anabaptists, Spiritualists, and Anti-Trinitarians came into being, was that of the challenge of Roman institutional Christianity, first at the point of its practices and then with respect to its teachings —chiefly its principle of authority and its soteriological doctrine, together with that of a Protestant reconstruction on the basis of *Volkskirchen* that purposely did not basically alter the fundamental nature of the church. A study of Anabaptist, Spiritualist, and Anti-Trinitarian writings shows that in each movement criticism of the Roman and Protestant churches was a prominent feature. These criticisms only rarely proceeded from what may be called abstract ecclesiological principles alone. In fact, the moral and religious conditions within Roman and Protestant churches often formed the center of the polemic.[4]

The concept of a fallen or corrupted Christendom was a recurrent theme among the radical writers. Yet, when did this fall occur? From Polish Anabaptism comes the record of the dating of the fall of Christendom "with the death of Simeon, the last of the grand old men who had known Jesus and the Twelve," in A.D. 111 on the basis of Eusebius.[5] Sebastian Franck wrote in 1531 concerning an alteration of "the outward church of Christ" which occurred "right after the death of the apostles" or fourteen hundred years before, i.e., A.D. 131. The outward church, according to Franck, "went up into heaven and lies concealed in the Spirit and in truth," and for fourteen centuries "there has existed no gathered church nor any sacrament."[6] The question as to whether this is, for Franck, the fall or the "maturation" of Christianity has been rightly raised by George H. Williams.[7] Franck's concept seems to have influenced John Campanus, and through Campanus it seems to have been transmitted to the Wassenberger preachers and Bernard Rothmann of Münster.[8] Thomas Müntzer affirmed that the Christian church "did not remain a virgin any longer than up to the time of the death of the disciples of the apostles and soon thereafter became an adultress."[9] More common among radical writers is the dating of the fall of the true church in

4 *Infra, 40.*

5 Earl Morse Wilbur, ed., *A History of the Polish Reformation by Stanislaus Lubieniecki.* MSS, p. 33, cited by Littell, *op. cit.*, pp. 62, 126. Cf. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiae*, III, 32.

6 "A Letter to John Campanus," *SAW*, p. 149.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 149, n. 11.

8 Campanus' *Contra totum post apostolos mundum* (1529) is not extant. His *Restitution* was written in 1532. Rothmann wrote *Restitution rechter und gesunder christlicher Lehre* and *Bekenntnisse van beyden sacramenten* (1533) after Henrik Rol had called his attention to Campanus' *Contra. . . .* Cf. Littell, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 73.

9 "Sermon Before the Princes," *SAW*, p. 51.

the era of Constantine, in which the union of church and state began to be forged. This interpretation occurs in one passage in the Hutterite Chronicle, according to which "the cross was conquered and forged to the sword . . . through the slyness of the Old Serpent."[10] Michael Servetus also dated the fall of true Christianity in the fourth century, but for different reasons from those expressed by Anabaptists. For Servetus the fall occurred at the Council of Nicea (325) with its dogmatic formulation of Trinitarian doctrine.[11] Menno Simons held that the fall was a process, beginning in early Christian times, increasing under Constantine, and culminating in Innocent I's edict enforcing infant baptism (407).[12] Other writers, while emphatic that the fall had occurred, were less concerned to date it. Obbe Philips in his "Confession" declared that "the first church of Christ and the apostles was destroyed and ruined in early times by Antichrist."[13] Pilgram Marpeck, representing South German Anabaptism, discounted apostolic succession but affirmed that "Christ's commands were truly observed in the church for over a millennium after His passion, resurrection, and ascension."[14] Dietrich Philips in the most extended ecclesiological treatise of the radical Reformation mentioned a "first falling away from God in his congregation (*Gemeynte*)" among angels in heaven and a "second falling away" with the sin of Adam and Eve but was strangely silent as to a falling away after the beginning of distinctly Christian history.[15] Thus for Dietrich Philips the fall is essentially the fall of angels and of men in the primordial sense. Whether this silence indicates that the author held to some continuity of the true church through the medieval era[16] or whether the silence is due to his desire to dissociate himself from all contemporary schemes positing a chronologically identifiable restoration is not certain. The Hutterite Chronicle has been interpreted as supporting the continuity of the people of God through "a righteous remnant within or alongside of the ancient and medieval church."[17] The absence of the explicit idea of the fall of the church in the extant writings of the Swiss Brethren is likely explicable, in all cases except that of Hubmaier,[18] on the ground that the idea is a more theoretical

10 A. J. F. Zieglschmid, *Die älteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder* (Philadelphia, 1943) p. 34, translated and cited by Littell, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

11 Roland H. Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty* (Philadelphia, 1951), p. 77.

12 Cornelius Krahn, *Menno Simons* (Karlsruhe, 1936) p. 136, cited by Littell, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

13 *SAW*, p. 207.

14 John C. Wenger, "The Theology of Pilgram Marpeck," *MQR* XII (October, 1938) 245-46, based on Marpeck, *Verantwortung*, 565.

15 "The Church of God," *SAW*, pp. 229 f.

16 Williams, *SAW*, p. 227. Dietrich Philips refers to a "first falling away" (angels in heaven) and a "second falling away" (Adam and Eve) but only to a "first restoration" (protevangelium, Gen. 3:15).

17 Williams, *SAW*, p. 39.

18 *Infra*, 71-75.

formulation than was necessary in the hazardous beginnings of the Swiss movement. The admonition of Conrad Grebel and others to Thomas Müntzer, "Go forward with the Word and establish a Christian church with the help of Christ and his rule . . . ," implied a discontinuity with the apostolic church order.[19] Caspar Schwenckfeld's criticism of all visible, external churches, whether Roman, Lutheran, Zwinglian-Calvinist, or Anabaptist, and his spiritualizing of Christianity would seem to imply the fall of the church,[20] but this is made unnecessary, strictly speaking, by virtue of his concept of an invisible, universal church.

The concept of a fall of the true Christian church, and especially Dietrich Philips' idea of a falling away in the congregation of God, suggests the related problem of the origin of the church. The origin, if less explicitly stated and less frequently mentioned by radical writers, nevertheless formed an essential presupposition of their concept of the church. Did the radicals teach that the church was coextensive with the people of God and thus derivative from the dawn of the human race or even from the heavenly order, or did they teach that the Christian church was the result of the advent of Jesus Christ into human history? Actually both views are to be found. Dietrich Philips' "The Church of God" embodies the first view. After tracing the people of God in the Old Testament, Philips concludes, "Thus the congregation of God from the beginning existed in Christ, by whom all things are renewed." His idea of two congregations, God's and the devil's, is basically Augustinian. The congregation of God was "extended" to the Gentiles.[21] The same idea of two congregations and of "the church of the pious . . . from the beginning" is held by Menno; yet, in reply to Gellius Faber's pedobaptist argument of "but one church and one faith, in the Old and New Testament, from the time of Adam to the end of the world," Menno affirmed that "each dispensation has its own doctrine, ordinance, and usage."[22] For Peter Riedemann the separation of "the devout from the godless" from Adam's day onward was not so much an affirmation of the origin of the church as an argument for separation in his own day.[23] On the contrary, Pilgram Marpeck espoused the view that the Christian church began at Pentecost; this he asserted on the basis of the future tense in "I will build" (Matt. 16:18).[24]

19 "Letters to Thomas Müntzer by Conrad Grebel and Friends," *SAW*, p. 79.
20 Selina Gerhard Schultz, *Caspar Schwenckfeld von Ossig* (Norristown, 1947) 327 f.
21 *SAW*, pp. 228-34, esp, 233 f.
22 "Reply to Gellius Faber" (1554), Leonard Verduin, trans., *The Complete Works of Menno Simons, c. 1496-1561* (Scottdale, 1956) 734-39, 683.
23 Peter Rideman, *Account of Our Religion, Doctrine and Faith*. Trans. by Kathleen E. Hasenberg (Bromdon, 1950) 139.
24 Wenger, *op. cit.*, p. 244, based on Marpeck, *Testamentserläuterung*, 202A.

Also in Marpeck the idea of the two covenants was more sharply defined.[25]

II. DIFFERING CONCEPTS OF THE TRUE CHURCH: ITS RESTITUTION, ITS NATURE, ITS IDENTITY

One does not for long study the radical Reformation without discovering the real and divergent distinctions as to the nature of the remedy to be applied to sick, corrupt, fallen Christendom. If the fall of the true church afforded a common denominator for Anabaptist, Spiritualist, and Anti-Trinitarian, the restoration of the true church became their point of separation or disjuncture.

The radical Reformation contained the frequently enunciated concept of "restitution," which has been recently studied by Frank J. Wray.[26] Probably derived from the Humanism of Erasmus and Zwingli and possibly also from Joachimitism, the concept was, as Littell suggests, conveyed to Anabaptists through George Witzel.[27] The term was used in book titles by John Campanus, Rothmann,[28] and Servetus,[29] as the title for a portion of David Joris' *'T Wonderboeck,* as the title for a tract by Dietrich Philips, by the Familist, Henry Niclaes, and by William Postel. In the Bern Debate of 1538 the Anabaptists argued that the true church had ceased for a time and that they themselves had undertaken a new beginning. The Hutterite Chronicle initially dated the time of the restitution as that of Luther's theses (1517), but later revisions dated it 1524, 1525, or 1526 in Switzerland.[30] Riedemann, the Hutterite, compared the re-establishment of the true church with the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.[31] At the same time opposition to any restoration of an external, visible church was expressed by Franck, Caspar Schwenckfeld, John Bünderlin and others. The concept of restitution was especially prominent in the Netherlander-North German region. Not only did restorationists differ from anti-restorationists, but among restorationists there were basic differences. This suggests the need for a clear demarcation of the types of "true church" doctrine found in the radical Reformation.

The first ecclesiological type to be noted is that of a restored, gathered congregation or brotherhood of baptized believers under discipline and separated from the world and from the state. At first glance one would hasten to call this the Anabaptist view of the

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 208-12, 242 f.
26 "The Anabaptist Doctrine of the Restitution of the Church," *MQR* XXVIII (July 1954) 186-96.
27 Littell, *op. cit.*, p. 73. Cf. *supra*, 8.
28 *Supra*, 8.
29 *Christianismi Restitutio* (1553).
30 Wray, *op, cit.*, pp. 193 f.
31 Rideman, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

church. Yet the distinctive Hutterite development prevents such a ready conclusion. This is the concept of the true church which predominated among the Swiss Brethren, the Täufer of South Germany, Tirol, etc., and the Mennonites of North Germany, the Netherlands, and Prussia. Harold S. Bender defines the concept as follows:

> The church *(Gemeinde),* according to the Anabaptists, is a voluntary and exclusive fellowship of truly converted believers in Christ, committed to follow Him in full obedience as Lord; it is a brotherhood, not an institution.[32]

The letter of Conrad Grebel and others to Müntzer (1524) embodies this concept of the church in the admonition to Müntzer to establish a disciplined Christian congregation, and the failure of Müntzer to reply may have been due in part to his differing conception of the church and its relation to the kingdom.[33] The Schleitheim Confession (1527) is evidence of the early acceptance of the idea of a separated and disciplined congregation.[34] Pilgram Marpeck, especially in his *Verantwortung,* in reply to Schwenckfeld urges the necessity of the restoration of an organized true church. For him no contemporary commission is needed, only the Scriptures, which contain the commission of Christ. Such a true church is not based on apostolic succession but created by the proclamation of the Word of God and patterned according to the New Testament. Marpeck, according to Wenger, regarded the church as "the present manifestation of the Kingdom."[35] In Menno Simons the doctrine of the true church of the reborn is set in contrast to "the church of the Antichrist."[36] Cornelius Krahn speaks of *"Mennos ecclesiozentrische Theologie."* What was a peripheral concern to Luther, namely, the concept of an *ecclesiola in ecclesia* in his "German Mass," was central to Menno Simons. While Calvin's concept of the church was *"alttestamentlich-theokratisch,"* that of Menno was *"neutestamentlich-christozentrisch."*[37] Menno did not hesitate to confess, "I believe in one holy, Christian church, the community of saints," but this affirmation had for him a distinctly qualitative connotation.[38] The same basic understanding of the true church is manifest in Dietrich Philips. He assumes that the restoration has taken place and is primarily con-

32 "Church," *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* I (Scottdale, 1955) 594.

33 *SAW,* pp. 73-85. Williams states that "it is clear that the preacher of the Sermon Before the Princes . . . had a different spirit from theirs" (p. 72).

34 Wenger, "The Schleitheim Confession of Faith," *MQR* XIX (October, 1945) 243-53.

35 Wenger, "Pilgram Marpeck, Tyrolese Engineer and Anabaptist Elder," *Church History* IX (March, 1940), 31, 34f.; Wenger, "The Theology of Pilgram Marpeck," p. 243, based on Marpeck, *Testamentserläuterung,* 210.

36 "Reply to Gellius Faber," pp. 734-39.

37 Krahn, *op cit.,* pp. 113-119.

38 "Reply to Gellius Faber," p. 754.

cerned to characterize the true church.[39] Nicholas Felbinger, a Hutterite, wrote in 1560:

> I have not left the true Christian Church; I have but joined her and let myself be incorporated into her by true Christian baptism. I have no doubt that I am in the true community and fellowship of the saints. . . . Thus I have not left the true Christian Church, but the so-called 'Christian' congregation of sinners and the unjust, prostitutes, adulterers, gamblers, slanderers of God, gluttons, winebibbers, liars, covetous men and idolaters who do not cease to rouse God to wrath.[40]

Even Ludwig Haetzer, described as "a marginal Anabaptist," left Zwinglianism not because of "dogmatic reasons" but "by consideration of church policy."[41]

Such a concept of the true church as a gathered and disciplined community of believers separated from the world and from the state was quite often identified or described in terms of certain "ordinances" or marks. Grebel in his protestation before the Zurich Council insisted on baptism and the Lord's Supper rightly administered.[42] The Schleitheim Confession bespeaks agreement concerning baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the ban.[43] Dietrich Philips discussed in detail "the seven ordinances of the true church." These were "the pure and unfalsified doctrine of the Word" together with "correct ministers," the "Scriptural use of baptism and the Lord's Supper," footwashing, evangelical separation including the ban, brotherly love according to Christ's command, the keeping of all Christ's commands, and suffering and persecution.[44] Menno Simons similarly listed six such signs of the true church. Four of these were identical with those of Philips; Menno omitted footwashing and evangelical separation and expanded suffering into two statements.[45]

The second distinct ecclesiological type in the radical Reformation is that of the church-community, which was distinctive among the Hutterian Brethren. The Hutterites shared with Anabaptism in general the ideas of a gathered, baptized, and disciplined congregation separated from the world, but held to the apostolicity and necessity of community of goods.[46] This meant that in the Hutterite conception the congregation of believers was co-extensive with a socio-

39 "The Church of God," *SAW*, pp. 228-60.
40 Robert Friedmann, "Claus Felbinger's Confession of 1560," *MQR* XXIX (April 1955), 155.
41 Gerhard Goeters, "Ludwig Haetzer, A Marginal Anabaptist," *MQR* XXIX (October 1955) 253.
42 Harold S. Bender, *Conrad Grebel c. 1498-1526; The Founder of the Swiss Brethren Sometimes Called Anabaptists* (Goshen, 1950) 204, based on *Protestation*, p. 369.
43 Wenger, "The Schleitheim Confession of Faith," arts. 1-3.
44 "The Church of God," *SAW*, pp. 240-55.
45 "Reply to Gellius Faber," pp. 739-43.
46 Cf. Williams, *SAW*, pp. 272f.

economic community. Thus Ulrich Stadler could say, "There is one communion (*gmain*) of all the faithful in Christ and one community (*gmainschaft*) of the holy children called of God."[47] To the Cyprianic doctrine Stadler gave a Hutterite interpretation. One who holds to private ownership and does not desire to "be one (*gmainsam*) with Christ and his own in living and dying . . . is outside of Christ and his communion (*gmain*) and has thus no Father in heaven."[48] Such community of goods is the highest expression of that "abandon" (*Gelassenheit*) which is essential to Christian discipleship.[49] "Exclusion" (*Ausschlusz*), as Williams has pointed out, "is more than the ban of the noncommunitarian Anabaptists, because the whole of the exile's economic and social as well as religious life is involved."[50] The Hutterites, while avowing separation from the worldliness of *Volkskirche* and *Obrigkeit*, by virtue of their communal living in *Bruderhöfe* assigned to some of their ministers semi-civil functions. The concept and practice of community even affected the interpretation given to the Lord's Supper by the Hutterites. The idea seems to have first occurred in the yet undiscovered *Didache*. According to Felbinger,

> . . . by means of bread and wine He has shown the community of His body. Even as natural bread is composed by the coming together of many grains, ground under the millstones, and each giving the others all it possesses, they have community with one another, and thus become one loaf; and as, likewise, the wine is composed of many grapes, each sharing its juice with the rest in the wine press, so that they become one drink. Even so are we also . . . He the vine and we His branches, He the head and we His members.[52]

The third ecclesiological type was the church-kingdom, which at Münster issued in a church-kingdom-state. Thomas Müntzer represented this kind of a concept. The church accordingly is subordinated to the imminent eschatological kingdom. Baptism of professed believers only, the gathering of believers only into a disciplined congregation, and separation from the *Volkskirche* and from the princely rule formed no essential part of this conception. In fact, in Müntzer's case, these elements were conspicuously absent. His "Sermon before the Princes" (1524) reveals his interpretation of Daniel 2, according to which the clay and iron feet and toes (vs. 41-43) represent feudal-

47 "Cherished Instructions on Sin, Excommunication, and the Community of Goods," *SAW*, p. 277.
48 *Ibid.*, p. 278.
49 *Ibid.*, pp. 279f.; Williams, *SAW*, p. 272.
50 Williams, *SAW*, p. 274, n. 4.
51 *Didache*, IX, 4; cf. Friedmann, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
52 Friedmann, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

istic Christendom with its clerical and magisterial power and the "stone" (v. 45), which shall destroy such Christendom, represents Christ.[53] The enemies of the prophets of the last days must be destroyed, if need be by violence; "otherwise the Christian church (*Kirche*) cannot come back again to its origin. The weeds must be plucked out of the vineyard of God in the time of harvest."[54] Such "ecclesiological" use of force stands in marked contrast to the repudiation of force which inhered in the first two types. Müntzer in his Prague Manifesto of 1521 did say that "the new church" would arise in Bohemia.[55] As Robert Friedmann has stated:

> It was to be the church of the new aeon, the church without the ungodly, an apocalyptic vision, no concrete reality. This is theory. But what was Müntzer's practice? First, he remained to the very end of his life a priest-preacher both in Allstedt and in Mühlhausen city churches, and hence never actually opposed an institution of that kind (either Catholic or Lutheran in nature). Second, his Allstedt League was anything but an Anabaptist brotherhood; it was rather a conspiratorial secret society to promote the imminently expected kingdom of God by means of wiping out, if need be by the sword, all (Catholic) superstition —a chapel was burned down—and all ungodliness. Of a restitution of the primitive church in the Anabaptist sense there is no trace whatever, since Müntzer completely lacked the idea or vision of discipleship and obedience to the Word of God.[56]

Such an apocalyptic church-kingdom arose in more developed form at Münster. The Münsterite theocracy differed from Müntzer's teaching and practice in at least two important respects. It was no apocalyptic society but a state church captured by rebaptizing, chiliastic Spiritualists and never reconstituted on the basis of professed believers only. Likewise, Münsterite baptism was the forced baptism of adults, but not necessarily of those professing faith or evidencing regeneration. Furthermore, the Münsterite theocracy differed from both general and Hutterite Anabaptism in its use of the sword and denial of liberty of conscience and in its lack of discipline after the New Testament pattern.[57] Münsterism, as indicated by Bernard Rothmann's writings,[58] was a militant abortive church-kingdom constructed on the equality of the Testaments.

The fourth ecclesiological type in the radical Reformation was

53 *SAW*, pp. 63f.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

55 Robert Friedmann, "Thomas Müntzer's Relation to Anabaptism," *MQR* XXXI (April 1957) 85.

56 *Ibid.*

57 John Horsch, "The Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists of Münster," *MQR* IX (July 1935) 129-43.

58 *Supra*, 8, 28.

that of the inward, invisible, universal, spiritual church, ungathered and without external sacraments or worship. This is the church of the Franckian-Schwenckfelder tradition. Sebastian Franck's "Letter to John Campanus" (c. 1531) is an appeal for this conception of the church. For fourteen centuries, he affirms, the outward church has been concealed in heaven. During this time its outward ceremonies have been yielded to Satan, but their inward truth has continued. Franck believed that only by some special call or commission from God should one undertake any gathering of visible churches. Appeal is made to Campanus not to attempt any such restoration. Instead, "let the church of God remain in the Spirit . . . , let them be . . . instructed, governed, and baptized by the Doctor of the New Covenant, namely, the Holy Spirit."[59] Schwenckfeld was critical of all visible churches as lacking in unity, love, and other qualities.[60] He stressed a two-nature Christology and hoped that thereupon Christ would "build his chosen church and through it . . . gather the children of God which are scattered over all the earth."[61] While he affirmed, "I know of no Schwenckfeldian assemblage, nor do I desire to secure for myself a following," Schwenckfeld did evoke some religious conventicles in his own day.[62] Even the power of the keys is said by him to have been invested in the invisible, spiritual church.[63] John Bünderlin's *Erklärung* discouraged any restoration of a visible church.[64] The mysticism of Hans Denck and of David Joris, together with the latter's concept of the third age, made them sympathetic with this concept of the church.[65] While Schwenckfeld came to his ecclesiology from Lutheranism, Sebastian Castellio reacted against Calvinism.

> This (true) Church is unknown to the Calvinists because, being taken up with their visible and carnal Church and impeded by its visible marks, they are not able to consider and see the spiritual Church. . . . But the children of this celestial Church recognize it just as children recognize their mother, and they know no less their brothers than the carnal know their own. . . .[66]

Obbe Philips in his later years was disinclined to favor the establishment of a congregation with "ordination, office, and order."[67] Mi-

59 *SAW*, p. 156.

60 Schultz, *op. cit.*, pp. 327f. Fritz Heyer speaks of Franck and Schwenckfeld as *"die unparteiischen Spiritualisten," Der Kirchenbegriff der Schwärmer* (Leipzig, 1939) pp. 37 ff.

61 *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum*, ed. by C. D. Hartranft and E. E. S. Johnson (Leipzig, Breitkopf und Hartel, 1907-36) XVI, Doc. MCLXVI, trans. by Schultz, *op. cit.*, p. 281. Hereafter cited as *CS*.

62 *CS*, XIII, 161-63, trans. by Schultz, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

63 *CS*, XI, Doc. DCCXXXVII, 980.

64 Friedrich Otto zur Linden, *Melchior Hofmann, Ein Prophet der Wiedertäufer* (Haarlem, 1885) p. 25, n. 2.

65 Wray, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

66 Sebastian Castellio, "Bruno Becker MS.," *Church History* IX, 3 (1940), p. 272, quoted by Bainton, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

67 "A Confession," *SAW*, p. 207.

chael Servetus approximated this same kind of doctrine of the church. As a protagonist for antipedobaptism he rejected the Israel-circumcision analogy, and, says Bainton, "the reason was that the Church for him was not a community, self-perpetuating through propagation, but rather a fellowship in the Spirit."[68] Indeed, for Servetus, "the celestial Jerusalem, the heavenly paradise, the kingdom of Christ is within us."[69] Servetus' expectation of the restitution of the Church in A. D. 1585 gave an eschatological emphasis to his thinking. The restored Church was to be identical with the chiliastic kingdom.[70]

Not all representatives of the radical Reformation can be exactly classified according to the preceding four ecclesiological types. The principal case in point is Hubmaier, the former professor of Catholic theology. Perhaps no single leader in the entire radical Reformation retained so many of the thought-forms of the Catholic doctrine of the Church. In his "Twelve Articles of Christian Belief" (1527) Hubmaier affirmed:

> I believe . . . and confess a holy Catholic Christian Church, which is the communion of the saints, and a brotherhood of many pious and believing men, who unitedly confess one Lord, one God, on faith and one baptism; assembled, maintained, and ruled on earth by the only living and divine word. . . . O my God, grant that I and all men believing in Christ may finally be found in this Church. . . . I believe and confess . . . the remission of sins, so that this Christian Church has received keys. . . . Again, whomsoever the Church bindeth and casteth out of her assembly on earth, he is bound before God in heaven and excluded from the Catholic Christian Church (outside of which there is no salvation). . . .[71]

Herein Hubmaier was not too explicit in distinguishing the universal Church from particular churches, but this he had done in his "Table of Christian Doctrine" (1526).[72] The particular church may err, but the universal Church is infallible.[73] Hubmaier described this relationship by a mother-daughter analogy. "Out of this people (i.e., the universal Church) there has now become a separate and outward church, and a new daughter born of her mother—as the mother, that is, the universal Church, does the will of her husband and spouse, who is Jesus Christ."[74] Hubmaier, steeped by training in the Catholic

68 *Hunted Heretic: The Life and Death of Michael Servetus* (Boston, 1953) p. 140. Cf. *Christianismi Restitutio*, p. 412.
69 *Christianismi Restitutio*, p. 375, trans. by Bainton, *Hunted Heretic*, p. 141.
70 Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty*, pp. 83f.
71 Arts. 9, 10, trans. by Henry C. Vedder, *Balthasar Hubmaier* (New York, 1915) pp. 134f.
72 *Ibid.*, p. 207.
73 *Ibid.*
74 "Concerning Brotherly Discipline" (1527), *Ibid.*, p. 206.

ecclesiology, evidently took up that distinction of universal and particular churches which the magisterial Reformers employed, and joined to it the Anabaptist distinctives. For Hubmaier the church was the body of the forgiven, the saved; the present social consequences of this corporateness seem not to have attracted his attention.

III. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH: PRINCIPAL ANALOGIES AND AFFIRMATIONS

Finally, the nature of the church according to the radical Reformation needs to be examined from the standpoint of the principal analogies applied and affirmations made about the church. Such data is drawn principally from those representatives of the radical Reformation who have been classified under the first, second, and fourth types.

From the earliest Anabaptist records prevails the concept of the church as a brotherhood. The Schleitheim Confession bears the German title, *Brüderlich vereynigung etzlicher Kinder Gottes, sieben Artickel betreffend.*[75] The Tirolese church discipline of the pre-Hutterite period, ferreted from the Hutterite Chronicle and ascribed to Hans Schlaffer (d. 1528) by Friedmann, indicates "how a Christian should live" within the brotherhood.[76] Nicholas Felbinger wrote that "a devout man is never happier than with his dear brothers and fellows in faith, where each can show the others love and good."[77]

The Anabaptist literature also reveals from the early years another prominent idea, that of the people of God, or the chosen or elect people of God. The Hutterite Chronicle, after tracing history from Christ to the time of Luther and Zwingli, proceeds to say, "But because God wished to have his own people. . . ."[78] Riedemann described the true church as "the holy people of God,"[79] and Stadler referred to "the pilgrims of the Lord" and "the elect, the called, the holy ones in this life."[80] Similarly, the analogy of the remnant was used, especially to differentiate the radical type of restitution from the Protestant and Catholic institutional churches. Marpeck gave emphasis to the idea of "the people of the new covenant."[81]

The radicals, as would be expected, applied the Pauline metaphor of body to the church. In writing to Müntzer, Grebel and the

75 Wenger, "The Schleitheim Confession of Faith," p. 243.

76 Friedmann, "The Oldest Church Discipline of the Anabaptists," *MQR* XXIX (April 1955) 162-66.

77 Friedmann, "Claus Felbinger's Confession of 1560," p. 156.

78 "Reminiscences of George Blaurock," *SAW*, p. 42.

79 Rideman, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

80 "Cherished Instructions on Sin, Excommunication, and the Community of Goods," *SAW*, p. 278.

81 Wenger, "The Theology of Pilgram Marpeck," p. 246, based on Marpeck, *Taufbüchlein*, 188f.

others affirmed that the bread of the Supper, "when . . . used in the church, . . . is to show us that we are truly one bread and one body."[82] The concept was quite acceptable to the Hutterites, and thus its use can be found in the writings of Riedemann, Stadler, and Felbinger.[83]

Another metaphor applied to the church was the bridal concept. The true church is declared to be the bride or spouse of Jesus Christ, the bridegroom. Melchior Hofmann elaborated this concept in great detail in his "The Ordinance of God" (1530). Baptism is likened unto a betrothal, the Lord's Supper unto marriage, and between the two is an exodus into the wilderness.[84] Even Christ himself, declared Hofmann, betrothed himself unto the Father before undertaking his earthly mission.[85] True Christians come

> to the Sabbath and the true rest completely naked and resigned to enter the bed of the Bridegroom where the righteous (re)birth takes place and where one is instructed by God and the Word. And the soul is completely wedded by the grace of God.[86]

The bride owes to the Bridegroom absolute fidelity. The Bridegroom sends his emissaries "to assemble for his bride out of the bonds of darkness." Even the bread of the Lord's Supper is called "the ring" given by the Bridegroom to the bride.[87] Drawing from the Song of Solomon, Menno in his "The New Birth" (c. 1537),[88] his "Foundation of Christian Doctrine" (1539),[89] and his "Christian Baptism" (1539)[90] used the simple metaphor of bride and Bridegroom. The metaphor is also used by Riedemann[91] and by Hubmaier.[92] Interestingly, Servetus in his Pagini Bible of 1545 rejected the interpretation of the Song of Solomon as an allegory of Christ's love for the church.[93]

The biblical analogy of the holy city or new Jerusalem found frequent usage. Dietrich Philips elaborated the idea in the third part of his "The Church of God."[94] Accordingly, the true church has the characteristics of the new Jerusalem described in Revelation 21. Philips' interpretation is present rather than eschatological.

82 *SAW*, p. 76.
83 Rideman, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 86; Stadler, "Cherished Instructions . . . ," SAW, p. 187; Friedmann, "Claus Felbinger's Confession of 1560," pp. 156f.
84 Williams, *SAW*, p. 183.
85 "The Ordinance of God," *SAW*, pp. 189f.
86 *Ibid.*, p. 191.
87 *Ibid.*, pp. 185, 193f.
88 Verduin, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 93f. This passage also reveals Menno's habit of mixing the metaphors so as to form an extended description of the church.
89 *Ibid.*, p. 221.
90 *Ibid.*, p. 234.
91 Rideman, *op. cit.*, pp. 38, 44, 147.
92 "Twelve Articles of Christian Belief," art. 9; "Table of Christian Doctrine"; "Concerning Brotherly Discipline" (1527); "Ground and Reason" (1527); trans. by Vedder, *op. cit.*, pp. 134, 207, 206, 205.
93 Bainton, *Hunted Heretic*, p. 100.
94 *SAW*, pp. 255-60.

A prominent aspect of Anabaptist ecclesiology was the idea of the suffering church. Marpeck stressed the idea of a *"leidende* not a *regierende Gemeinde."*[95] According to David Joris, "the Holy Church is not that which persecutes but that which suffers persecution."[96] The Hutterite Chronicle could well be described as "the chronicle of a suffering church." Anabaptists gave a positive interpretation to persecution and suffering and criticized the advocates of an invisible, spiritual church for an unwillingness to suffer.

The church as a covenant of believers is to be found in some of the sources. Champlin Burrage found the idea in Sattler's Schleitheim Confession, the first clear usage by Jacob Kautz and Wilhelm Reublin of the Strassburg Anabaptists, and the elaboration of the concept by Melchior Hofmann.[97] According to the Strassburgers,

> . . . when God in His mercy and grace . . . called us from the Devil . . . into his marvelous light, we were not unmindful of the heavenly message, but made a covenant *(Bund)* with God in our hearts, all our days by his strength to serve Him henceforth in holiness and to make known this our purpose to the covenant members (confederates).[98]

The parable of the tares was used by the radicals as well as by others in the sixteenth century. Although claiming usually in implicit fashion that they themselves were the wheat, the radicals more often used the parable in connection with discipline and persecution. Hubmaier, writing before he became an Anabaptist,[99] and Joris used the parable as a plea for religious toleration. "Better die a thousand deaths than to kill a believing Christian or a righteous soul. . . . Leave the tares," Joris warned.[100] However, Marpeck [101] and Menno[102] defended the parable against their opponents who used it as a text against a disciplined church. Both Marpeck and Menno insisted that "the field" is "the world," not the church. On the contrary, Müntzer used the parable to justify magisterial persecution of the Protestant leaders. [103]

The radicals in common with Catholic and Protestant ecclesiology made use of the term, "the communion of saints." This may be

95 Wenger, "Pilgram Marpeck, Tyrolese Engineer and Anabaptist Elder," p. 35.
96 Quoted by Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty*, p. 137.
97 Champlin Burrage, *The Church Covenant Idea* (Philadelphia, 1904) pp. 13-25. Burrage refers to Hans Locher's *"Ein tzeitlang geschwigner christlicher Bruder"* (1523) as possibly the earliest usage; yet the word "covenant" is not used.
98 T. W. Röhrich, "Zur Geschichte der strassburgischen Wiedertäufer in den Jahren 1927 bis 1543, aus den Vergichtbüchern und anderen archivalischen Quellen," *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie*, trans. by Burrage, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
99 "Fundamental Articles, Hubmaier to Eck" (1524), trans. by Vedder, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
100 Quoted by Bainton, *The Travail of Religious Liberty*, p. 139.
101 Wenger, "The Theology of Pilgram Marpeck," p. 251, based on Marpeck, *Testamentserläuterung*, 210.
102 "Reply to Gellius Faber," p. 750.
103 "Sermon Before the Princes," *SAW*, pp. 68f.

seen in the writings of Menno[104] and Riedemann.[105] The term carries no connotation of a relation between the "Church militant" and the "Church triumphant" but is expressive of that corporate unity which now characterizes God's holy people.

Two very expressive metaphors seem to have been used peculiarly by Riedemann. One of these is that of a "lantern of righteousness."

> The Church of Christ is the basis and ground of truth, a lantern of righteousness, in which the light of grace is borne and held before the whole world, that its darkness, unbelief and blindness be thereby seen and made light, and that men may also learn to see and know the way of life.[106]

Likewise, Riedemann likened the true church to "one plant, one tree, bearing and giving one kind of fruit,"[107] thus giving stress not only to the unity of the church but to its ethical fruitage.

A survey of the Anabaptist understanding of the church would not be complete without reference to the missionary character of the Anabaptist *Gemeinde*, to which careful attention has been given by Littell.[108] Anabaptists took seriously such biblical texts as Matthew 28:19f., Mark 16:15f., and Psalm 24:1. They removed chronological, clerical, and geographical limitations from Christ's Great Commission, for in their eyes "it applied to all Christians at all times"[109] and, within continental Europe, to all places. The "free evangel" rather than compulsory conversion[110] was believed to be the *modus operandi* of the true church.

> There was a definite transition from the Anabaptist pilgrim, who evangelized and taught where driven by the hounds of the established order, to the missioner whose trips were assigned as part of a grand strategy of spiritual conquest. Generally speaking, the establishment of the economy in Moravia may be used to mark the line of crossing from one dominant type to the other.[111]

Anabaptist martyrdom must be understood not only as the consequence of persecution but as the fulfillment of the evangelistic function of the *Gemeinde* after the manner of the apostolic era. The Anabaptists, to use a modern distinction, were "evangelistic" as well as "evangelical."

Not only the exact nature of the church according to the radical Reformation but the subsequent influence and contemporary relevance of its ecclesiology call for additional study and reflection.

104 "Reply to Gellius Faber," p. 754.
105 Rideman, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
106 *Ibid.*, p. 39f.
107 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
108 Littell, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-112.
109 *Ibid.*, p. 95.
110 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
111 *Ibid.*, p. 100.

The apocalyptic church-kingdom of Müntzer and Münster was destined to be reproduced in the Fifth Monarchy Men and related movements in mid-seventeenth century England. Its influence in the modern period has been meager, for the most pronounced millenarian movements have been non-violent.[112]

The inward, invisible, ungathered church of the Spiritualists has not been without its sympathizers. To classify the Friends in this tradition is not altogether correct, for despite Quaker inwardness the various yearly meetings can hardly be described as ungathered.

The church-community represented in the Hutterite tradition continues to find embodiment principally in its own Hutterite communities together with the associated communities derived from the leadership of Eberhard Arnold (1883-1935). As communal societies they are perhaps the prime example of non-Marxist communism. Retaining the Hutterite concept of community, the modern Hutterites have lost the early missionary outreach of the movement.

The gathered, baptized, separated, and disciplined congregation of Christian brethren, represented in the sixteenth century chiefly by the Swiss Brethren, the Anabaptists of the Tirol and South Germany, and the Mennonites, has been a primary concern not only of the directly descended Mennonites but also of those gathered churches indirectly related to Anabaptism, namely, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Disciples of Christ, *et al.*[113] Bender finds "the Anabaptist vision" to consist of three new conceptions, "Christianity as discipleship," "the church as a brotherhood," and the "ethic of love and non-resistance."[114] For Littell, Anabaptism is primarily the source of the idea of the free church, separated from the state and practicing "the prophethood of every believer"[115] in a vigorous missionary enterprise.[116] The Unitarians, finding their rootage in sixteenth century Anti-Trinitarianism, also espouse the concept of the free church separated from the state, yet without the missionary obligation.[117] Generally it may be observed that the Mennonites and the Hutterites have retained more fully the Anabaptist idea of a disciplined congregation separated from the world. The Anabaptist concept of the truly baptized community has been developed more fully by the Baptists and the Disciples, while the missionary character of Anabaptism has

112 Cf. the Plymouth Brethren and the *Scofield Reference Bible*, Seventh-Day Adventism, and even Jehovah's Witnesses whose Armageddon doctrine enjoins no present use of force.

113 The Disciples are mentioned despite their late (19th century) origin. Cf. the Church of the Brethren, the Churches of Christ, *et al.* No attempt is made here to formulate an all-inclusive list of remote descendants of Anabaptism.

114 "The Anabaptist Vision," *MQR* XVIII (April 1944) 67-88.

115 The phrase was used by H. Wheeler Robinson.

116 Littell, *op. cit.*, pp. 111f.

117 Cf. Earl Morse Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism: Socinianism and Its Antecedents* (Cambridge, 1945) pp. 3-11.

been extended chiefly through the indirect derivatives rather than through the Hutterites and the Mennonites.

The radical Reformation, especially evangelical Anabaptism, should be allowed to speak amid the ecclesiological ferment of the mid-twentieth century. The apocalyptic, the ungathered, and the communitarian concepts of the church which appeared during the sixteenth century may be said to have less relevance for the contemporary scene than the more general ecclesiological pattern of the Anabaptists. That the Anabaptist attitude toward the civil state may not suffice for Christians who presently live under democratic political order should not deprive contemporary Christians of an opportunity to behold the Anabaptist vision. Ecumenical discussion, which has addressed itself principally to the distinction between "visible churches" and "the invisible Church," could well consider the Anabaptist vision of the church as a brotherhood of disciples—gathered, baptized, separated, and disciplined. Among both the remote and the direct descendants of Anabaptism there is need for re-examining contemporary practice in the light of the Anabaptist heritage. Insofar as Anabaptism bore witness to an essential, indeed early apostolic,[118] aspect of the Christian church, its vision must continue, for *"die göttliche Wahrheit ist untödlich."*[119]

118 Acts 1:15; 6:2; 9:1; 11:1, 26.

119 Hubmaier, *Die ander Erbietung* (1524), quoted by Vedder, *op. cit.*, p. i.

THE TURNING POINT IN THE ZWINGLIAN REFORMATION

JOHN HOWARD YODER*

The most competent research into the beginnings of Anabaptism in Zürich[1] has dated the very first clear disagreement between Ulrich Zwingli and those of his followers who were later to become the Swiss Brethren from the late afternoon of October 27, 1523. Two days of public debate in the course of Zürich's second disputation had made clear that neither the celebration of the Mass nor the use of images in worship was scripturally justified. The intention of the burgomaster to adjourn the meeting until the next afternoon, at which time the doctrine of Purgatory should be discussed, had just been announced when

> Conrad Grebel rose and thought that the priests should be given instructions, since they were all present, as to what should be done about the Mass; [the disputation] would be in vain, if something were not done about the Mass. Much had been said about the Mass, but there seemed to be no one willing to forsake this abomination before God. Furthermore there were many more abuses in the Mass [*i.e.,* in addition to the claim that it has sacrificial character, which had been discussed thus far]; one should speak of them as well.
>
> *Zwingli:* My Lords [*i.e.,* the Zürich city Council] will decide how to proceed henceforth with the Mass.
>
> *Simon Stumpf:* Master Ulrich: ["Master" was Zwingli's academic title.] You have no authority to place the decision in the hands of My Lords, for the decision is already made; the Spirit of God decides. If then My Lords should adopt and decide anything against God's own decision, I shall ask Christ for His Spirit, and shall teach and act against it.
>
> *Zwingli:* That is right. I shall likewise preach and act against it if they decide otherwise. I don't place the decision in their hands. Nor shall they pass judgment on the Word of God (this applies not only to them, but to everyone). This convocation did not have the purpose of deciding for or against the Word of God, but to ascertain from Scripture whether the Mass is a sacrifice or not. Hereafter they will deliberate as to the way in which that may be done most appropriately and without disturbance.[2]

This exchange of arguments is somehow disappointing if one expects to find in it the expression of two irreconcilable views destined to give birth to the two major religious phenomena of modern Christendom, state-church Protestantism on the one hand and the Free Church on the other. Zwingli did not ascribe any normative

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1 Fritz Blanke, *Brüder in Christo* (Zürich 1955) 6; Harold S. Bender, *Conrad Grebel* (Goshen, 1950) 99f.

2 Report on the disputation of October 26-28 as edited by Ludwig Haetzer, in Zwingli's complete works in *Corpus Reformatorum* (hereafter referred to as *ZW*) II, 783-4

authority to the state; in fact he explicitly denied that "My Lords" had anything to say over against the Word of God. The one concession he did make, namely the assignment to the Council of the responsibility of appropriate and orderly execution, does not seem to have provoked any objection from Conrad Grebel. Not only did Grebel accept Zwingli's explanation as given above; he also declared himself satisfied on the following day after Zwingli had discussed the "other abuses" to which Grebel had objected in the celebration of the Mass.[3]

It is not difficult to understand how historians have come to ascribe such fundamental importance to this segment of the October disputation. They have, rightly, fixed upon the question of the authority of the state in religious matters, and have sought for the earliest point where something was said which could be construed as expressing a disagreement on this question.[4] This is a legitimate method in historical research, yet not the only usable one. History is interested not only in knowing when we can see the first hints of a later difficulty; it is just as important to know when the actors in the drama themselves became aware of the problem. This apparently did not happen between Zwingli and Grebel in October. They seem not to have seen the problem until nearly three months later.

If the study of church history is to have a real significance for the Christian church in our day, it must attach especial importance to the analysis of those "breaking points" which have left Christians with a heritage of dividedness in faith and life. It is therefore no idle academic recreation when we seek to ascertain as exactly as possible just how and why this most significant of all "breaking points" within Protestantism came to be reached.

We do well to begin by reminding ourselves of the degree of agreement which existed between Zwingli and Grebel up to and in the October disputation.[5] As far as concerns the goals of the Reformation the agreement was complete. Grebel was known as a close friend and

3 *ZW* II, 793.

4 Bender for instance says of Zwingli's first answer cited above, "Zwingli's answer was really an evasion. He did in reality do the very thing that he had protested to Stumpf and Grebel he would not do; he left the entire matter in the hands of the city council" (Bender, *op. cit.*, p. 98). This is a true analysis of the events of the next two years, but is not quite fair to the text and the events Bender is dealing with.

5 Grebel's name shall hereafter be used to represent not Conrad Grebel alone but the entire group of men of whom he was one of the leaders. How homogeneous and how conscious of its distinct identity that group was before it wrote to Luther, Müntzer, and Karlstadt in September 1524 we do not know.

The material presented in this article is largely drawn from the writer's Basel dissertation, *Die Gespräche zwischen Täufern und Reformatoren in der Schweiz 1523-1538*, soon to be published as *Reformation und Täufertum in der Schweiz: Die Gespräche*. Constant references to this work concerning matters here dealt with only in summary will not be made. Zwingli's works are cited by title from the above-named collection, in which they are ordered chronologically and provided with extensive historical introductions. References to Zwingli's writings will be footnoted only where a specific quotation must be identified.

enthusiastic disciple of Zwingli.[6] When, in June 1523, the Zürich Council decided to maintain the tithes against which Zwingli had been preaching, Grebel wrote in terms that indicate that he and Zwingli felt the same disappointment. A complaint about the Council's action ends with the words, "Zwingli can tell you about all this better than I."[7] Zwingli explained in his sermon and tract "Of divine and Human Justice" of the same period how it could be that the state must accept compromises in its application of God's Will—a point at which the documentary sources give us no grounds for surmising whether Grebel followed him or not—but he continued, at least as late as April 1525, to believe with Grebel that the taking of interest, including tithes in the form then current, was a sin worthy of the ban.[8]

A second area of agreement came to light in August, as Zwingli published his *Essay on the Order of Service for the Mass,* an attempt to expurgate the existing Mass liturgy without abandoning it completely. Criticism from his own disciples drove him to follow the *Essay* a few weeks later with a *Defense* in which he dealt with three criticisms. Two of these he accepted, and, going beyond the *Essay,* expressed the willingness to eliminate Latin singing and the priests' liturgical vestments. The third criticism, directed against prescribed liturgical prayers, on the grounds that Jesus had prescribed only the Lord's Prayer, Zwingli rejected. The October disputation, in which Zwingli stood strongly for the position taken in the *Defense*—i.e., the position of his critics was now his own—whereas Grebel said nothing against prescribed prayers, demonstrates that there had been a real meeting of minds between them, based on a common commitment to a strict biblicism.[9]

The October disputation had two immediate causes: the agitation against the Mass, which had taken on new proportions with the publication of Zwingli's own tracts, and the attacks on the "images" (i.e., sculptures and paintings used in churches and in processions), which had begun to take violent form in late September. The iconoclasts whose imprisonment provoked the calling of the disputation were Zwingli's disciples, and the reformer did not disavow them, even though he disapproved of their methods. He, together with other participants in the disputation, requested that the Council be

6 Bender, *op. cit.,* 82f.

7 Von Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz,* Vol. I, *Zürich* (Zürich, 1952) Nr. 2, p. 2.

8 Bender's remark, "In this question [tithes and interest] Zwingli appears to have changed his mind and abandoned his earlier position so that he probably was in agreement with the action" (*op. cit.,* p. 94) is refuted both by the above words of Grebel and by the general import of *Of Divine and Human Justice.*

9 "Everything which God has not commanded by word or deed is sin" is a principle which Zwingli accepts from the mouth of the critics to whom his *Defense* responds (*ZW* II, 622.)

lenient with them. When they were nonetheless expelled from the city Zwingli and Grebel both wrote to St. Gall to ensure their being welcomed there. One of them, Klaus Hottinger, has gone down in history as the first martyr of the Reformed branch of the Reformation.

Thus as far as the sources permit us to ascertain we must conclude that at the time of the October disputation Zwingli and his followers were in full agreement regarding the concrete goals of the Reformation. The question of infant baptism had not yet become an issue. At points where minor differences of opinion came to light they were able very rapidly to come to an understanding, as both Zwingli's *Defense* and the exchange between Zwingli and Grebel on the third day of the disputation demonstrated. This far-reaching agreement on even minor external details was possible because of the deeper common acceptance of the Scripture as the sole authority for setting the goals of the Reformation.

We turn next to the question of the procedure to be followed in introducing the reforms which the Bible demands. It is clear to Zwingli that "My Lords" are alone competent at this point. This does not however mean that the civil authorities have the right to decide against the Reformation; their authority extends only to assuring that its introduction be carried through "appropriately and without disturbance." This executive responsibility of the magistracy was already an assumption in Zwingli's exposition, published in May, of the sixty-seven theses he had drawn up for the January disputation. His confidence in the state was grounded on the decisions of November 1522, when Zwingli had resigned as a Roman Catholic priest and been reinstated as an employee of the city of Zürich (with the same preaching post as before), and in January 1523, when the outcome of the first disputation had been an order of the Council that henceforth nothing but the Gospel should be preached. In neither of these decisions had the state made any confession of faith or committed itself to the introduction of the Reformation. "My Lords" had in fact in both decisions simply taken the path of least resistance and ordered the maintenance of the state of things which Zwingli's preaching had by then already brought about. Nevertheless Zwingli —and with him most Reformation historians to our day—assumed that he could see there the definitive break-through of the Reformation, and that from that point on the Council would continue the good work it had begun. It was thus perfectly conceivable for Zwingli to say in October that the Council would have authority to deal with questions of application, but not of principle.

The firmness of Zwingli's position can best be seen in his answer to Conrad Schmid, Comtur of the Johannite house at Küssnacht, who at an earlier point in the disputation had appealed to I Corinthians 8 to argue that the Mass should not be abolished, out of regard for the weak in faith, until such time as it could be done without being offensive.

> One should not take away from the weak the staff on which he leans without giving him another, . . . therefore let the external images stand for the foolish and the weak, and teach them first of all that there is no life, holiness, or grace in them; . . . then they will discover that they have no need of the images, or even of the saints, and will willingly abandon them and joyfully lay hold of Christ. If Christ were thus in a man's heart in true knowledge, all images would fall away without offense.[10]

Sebastian Hofmeister, one of the four chairmen of the disputation, declared at this point that Schmid's argument was out of order, since he was discussing the procedures for dealing with the Mass—whether it should be abolished gradually or at once—rather than dealing with the question of principle. Nevertheless Zwingli went on to answer Schmid on the level of procedure.[11] Zwingli agreed to the necessity of teaching before the abolition of the Mass, but was of the opinion that this teaching had already been done more than adequately. He rejected expressly Schmid's idea that the images were a "staff for the weak" or that the consideration for the weaker brother taught in I Corinthians 8 should be grounds for their retention.

> What God has forbidden is no Adiaphoron. God's commandments pay no attention to such trifles as eating meat . . . . It is said throughout the Prophets and in the New Testament that images should under no circumstances exist among Christians. . . . There are two kinds of offense. Some take offense, not because they are infirm and weak in faith, but rather because they are ungodly. That is not infirmity but veritable malignity,[12] for they do not believe at all. On the other hand, some are really weak in their faith. Toward them indulgence is in order. . . .
>
> But it must be admitted that there comes an end to the taking of offense. Paul circumcised Timothy but refused to let Titus be circumcised. Why? Because it was high time for the offense to end. If we were to wait with the idols [Zwingli's polemic designation for the images] until no one took offense, as you [Schmid] advocate, then God's command to get the idols out and away would never be fulfilled. Likewise, if the external idols should not be eliminated until the idols of temptation were expelled, we should never get so far as to get rid of the images. . . . Therefore the images are not to be tolerated among Christians, for they are truly an abomination in God's eyes. After which the Comtur said he was fully satisfied.

10 *Ibid.*, II, 699-707.
11 *Ibid.*, 707-10.
12 The Latin words *infirmitas* and *malignitas* stand in the midst of the German text.

From this exchange it is clear that Zwingli was far from basing his strategy on concessions to the conservative. He admits in theory such a need, but denies that it exists in the case at hand, since everyone has been properly informed and it is now time to act.[13] This general attitude of Zwingli's makes it all the more difficult to believe that a few hours later he should have become an advocate of compromise.

Emil Egli[14] has argued that the October disputation was fundamentally different in its intent from that of January. In January a decision for or against the Reformation had to be made. In October however the only purpose was to determine the truth about images and the Mass, with no obligation on the part of the Council to act upon what would be decided. This explanation appears at first glance to have some weight,[15] but it raises more questions than it answers. Disputations were always called, whether at Zürich or elsewhere in Reformation times, when a move of major political significance was to be made. Their purpose was to legitimize the contemplated change by appeal to the only kind of moral authority the reformed governments could muster after the hierarchy and the universities had rejected the Reformation. They were not "exegetical congresses" (Egli's term); they claimed the authority to make valid decisions influencing the entire course of the church. If this October disputation in Zürich, in contrast to the general pattern for such gatherings, were meant as a purely academic debate, it is especially difficult to see why Zwingli should have dedicated a lengthy introductory development to establishing that the disputation assembly, being a local gathering of Christians, was a congregation empowered by Christ to act in His Name. The formulation and execution of the decision was of course left in the hands of the Council,[16] but Zwingli left no room for doubt that the October decisions would be just as binding as those of any other disputation.[17]

Another argument against this interpretation may be seen in the fact that at the end of the first day's deliberation Sebastian Hofmeister, in the name of the four chairmen and the two major speakers,

13 The same position had already been expressed in the *Defense* in August: "We seek to keep the peace—but only a Christian peace; we help the weak but only those for whose cure there is some hope" (*ZW* II, 62!). There are thus strict limits to the indulgence due the "weak in faith."

14 Emil Egli, *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte*, Vol. I (Zürich, 1910) 666.

15 *Cf.* Zwingli's answer to Stumpf above: "This convocation did not have the purpose . . ." and Hofmeister's answer to Schmid also cited above.

16 This authority is in fact all that is said in the texts cited in note 15 above. "My Lords" are to decide *"mit was fugen"* i.e., by what means, the decisions of the disputation assembly are to be executed. *Whether* they shall be executed is not left to "My Lords" to decide.

17 Closer analysis shows in fact that more was up for decision in October than had been in the previous January. In January the only question had been whether Zwingli was preaching the truth. Since no one objected, the bishop's representative having refused debate, the conclusion was simply that Zwingli could go on preaching. The January results could still be accepted by the Catholics in Zürich and in the other cantons without severe inconvenience.

Zwingli and Jud, asked the Council to abolish images and free the imprisoned iconoclasts. The burgomaster answered that they would "do well by the matter."[18] A second plea on behalf of the prisoners was made by Joachim von Watt, another of the chairmen, at the end of the disputation, and at the same time Zwingli appealed to the Council for courageous action in favor of the Gospel with such passion that he and many of those present wept.[19] Such requests have no place in an "exegetical congress."

But the final blow to Egli's thesis is a document which was unknown to Egli. The earliest known report on the October disputation, a letter written on October 31, tells a slightly different story from Haetzer's published record.[20]

> Burgomaster and Council did not want to acquiesce in this for the time being, but commanded imperatively that the figures of Christ and the saints should be left in the churches, that the Mass should be held in respect and should continue to be sung, for it is generally and openly known that if they would accept these theses the other Confederates [*i.e.* the other cantons] would attack them. Against this Zwingli spoke publicly in the presence of all those attending the disputation, saying that the Zürich authorities have no right to pass judgment in this matter, but rather Holy Scripture must decide on both questions.

It is not easy to reconcile this report with Haetzer's record.[21] Zwingli is here reported as saying exactly the same thing as Stumpf, and the Council as having decided already in the course of the meeting against any action at all. To weigh the two reports against each other is not our problem here; what interests us is that this letter confirms that really radical action was contemplated in the course of the disputation and denies that there was any difference between Zwingli and Grebel with respect to the rejection of compromise.[22] At the same time it indicates the real reason for the Council's hesitancy, which was nothing more theological than Zürich's fear of a war against all the rest of Switzerland. The January disputation had displeased the Confederates but had taken no real action which would

18 *ZW* II, 730; *cf.* Heinrich Bullinger's *Reformationsgeschichte*, ed. Hottinger and Vögeli, Vol. I (Frauenfeld, 1838) 132f.

19 *ZW* II, 799.

20 Letter of Veit Suter cited by Oscar Vasella, *Zeitschrift für Schweizerische Kirchengeschichte*, 1954, 184.

21 Vasella, *loc. cit.*, and *ibid.*, 1956, p. 221, asks whether Haetzer's text may have been changed to fit later events. The hypothesis has much on its side. Haetzer makes no claim to accuracy, and says himself that the text was seen by the authorities before printing (*ZW* II, 673-4, 803).

22 The sermon which Zwingli preached on the morning of the third day of the disputation, "Of the True and of the False Shepherd," was printed several months later. This is an impassioned appeal to the priests present to commit themselves to the cause of the Reformation, even to the point of being ready to give their lives for their sheep. The text of the sermon as we have it was written later than October; but its general tone of willingness to give all in the fight for the faith can hardly have been weaker in October than it is in the printed text. The state of tension which such a sermon in such a time and place testifies to would seem more in keeping with the report of Suter's letter than with the calm deliberations recorded by Haetzer.

threaten them or cost them anything. Now, since the attack on the images, the old order was menaced in a previously unheard-of way, and the rest of the nation could not look on without taking countermeasures. This was the ground of the Council's reticence.

Zwingli's attitude toward the question of procedure and the authority of the state may be summed up as follows: (1) The state has no right to judge on what Scripture says. (2) There can be adiaphora, morally neutral matters in which concessions to the unconvinced are in order. But the questions involved now are not adiaphora but deeply theological issues of right and wrong. (3) There can be such a thing as a necessary respect for the convictions of the "weak in faith," in application of the teaching of I Corinthians 8; but such considerations are valid only for a limited time, and no longer apply to images and the Mass after the teaching that has been done. (4) The state's authority is limited strictly to finding the most suitable means of execution for the decision made in the disputation.

On none of these points have we any sign of disagreement on the part of Grebel. In fact, his request for instructions to be given to the priests about the Mass can hardly be construed otherwise than as involving action by the Council. It thus seems clear: there were not two clearly defined camps, divided on the question of state versus biblical authority. Zwingli was no less biblicistic and no less impatient than Grebel. Grebel was no more legalistic and no less considerate for the "weak" than Zwingli.

If then the division did not occur in October 1523, how and when did it come about? The only possible explanation seems to be that either Zwingli or Grebel significantly changed his position sometime in the following months, and it is to the testing of this hypothesis that we must now turn. Grebel is inaccessible during these months, having left no known documents—another sign of his dependence on Zwingli. But the events following the disputation can be followed with some degree of clarity in so far as they reveal the positions of Zwingli and the Council.[23]

Conrad Schmid had proposed, near the close of the disputation, that the abolition of the Mass and images should be preceded by an educational effort backed by the Council's full authority.[24] The Council followed this suggestion and ordered the printing and dis-

23 Unfortunately the two most significant Council minutes from this period are not dated (Egli, *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Zürcher Reformation in den Jahren 1519-1533*, Zürich 1879, No. 436 p. 173, No. 458 p. 183). Zwingli's letter to Joachim von Watt in mid-November (*ZW* VIII, No. 321, p. 128) does not give sufficient detail to permit a definite reconstruction of the order of events.

24 *ZW* II, 794-98. We see here how Schmid's advocacy of compromise has changed under Zwingli's influence while his concern for education remains. He had first said there should be only teaching and no abolition order; now he asks for an abolition order including preliminary teaching.

tribution of an *Introduction*,[25] which Zwingli wrote immediately, dealing with the sense in which the Law is done away with, with images and the Mass, in a popular, expository way, with no statement as to how their knowledge was to be applied except for a word against iconoclasm. Meanwhile the Council ordered everyone to hold his peace.[26] The *Introduction* was proclaimed as the official teaching of the Council on November 17. Thus far the Council seemed to be moving forward, carefully but surely, in a way which justified the confidence placed in it to deal, not with questions of principle, but with applications.

Barely three weeks later, on December 10, new agitation against the Mass stirred the city. A number of old liturgical books were found where they had been thrown by the wayside, and the chaplains of Zwingli's own parish, the Grossmünster, refused to sing Mass any longer because of the way the common people jeered at them. This commotion, which could hardly have come to a focus as it did without Zwingli's consent, stirred the Council to renewed action. It seemed to indicate that at least one segment of the populace was ready to see the Mass abandoned. The Council requested an advisory memorandum (*Ratschlag*) from the three reforming pastors, Zwingli, Leo Jud, and Heinrich Engelhard. Apparently Zwingli and his friends had become aware of new reasons for fearing that the Council would procrastinate, for they expressed here a kind of determination which surpasses anything they had said before.[27]

> We intend to begin said usage [the evangelical observance of the Lord's Supper] on Christmas Day, in simple conformity to the institution and practice of Christ; for we can no longer withhold from the world the right to the proper celebration [of communion]; and *even if it should not be permitted, we must offer both body and blood, bread and wine to those who so desire, or stand condemned as liars by the Word of God.* **(Italics ours)**

This powerful statement is significant for a number of reasons. Zwingli, failing utterly to respect the division of authority which he accepted in October, here announces his intention to go ahead on his own and sets a date for the institution of the Lord's Supper according to evangelical conviction, whether the Council so desires or not. He further shows for the first time an awareness of the possibility that the Council might construe its authority to carry through the Reformation in the reverse form of an authority to delay the putting into effect of those changes which the October disputation had decided

25 *ZW* II, No. 27, p. 626ff.
26 Egli *Actensammlung*, No. 436, p. 173f.
27 *Ratschlag* No. I, *ZW* II, p. 808ff, written by Zwingli himself. Articles 1-4 deal with the Mass on the level of doctrine; 5 is cited here.

on; in the face of this possibility Zwingli's determination does not waver. It is further remarkable that Zwingli desires this change to take place on a basis of tolerance. Those priests who desire to continue with the Mass should not be hindered; they will simply not be replaced as they get old. No one shall be forced to attend Mass or communion, or to read Mass against his will.[28] This document states a truly revolutionary platform which, if applied by its authors, could have changed the whole course of Protestant church history.

Unfortunately, this plan was not carried through. Upon receiving this document the Council referred it to a larger commission. Zwingli and his two colleagues were members of the commission, but they were outweighed by eight councilmen and the three prelates of the Zürich church.[29] This commission produced another document, again written by Zwingli, in which most of the same things were said as in the first, but in a radically different way.[30]

> The previous opinion submitted by the three pastors is without a doubt the rightest of all and the most in conformity with the Word of God. Therefore nothing shall be undertaken in this matter which does not tend toward the point at which the simple pattern of the pure Word of God will be followed. Since however feelings are divided at present—many being just as foolish as we ourselves were not long ago—it will be necessary to make some concessions to the immature until they can attain the age and strength to take solid food.

Having made this plea for compromise, which sounds more like Conrad Schmid's earlier language than like Zwingli's, the memorandum requests the institution of evangelical communion for those who desire it, without the abolition of the Mass. This principle of tolerance is stated more clearly than in the previous memorandum, but the compromise for which the introductory paragraph was preparing the way is not this principle, which is neither new nor a compromise, but rather the fact that the threat of the three pastors to go on on their own even if forbidden has been dropped. The second memorandum expresses the same ideals and goals as the first, but not the same determination, and at this critical point that made all the difference in the world. When on December 19 the Council rejected not only the first memorandum but in fact both of them and ruled that there should be no change at all with respect to the Mass (a third memorandum concerning images was accepted in principle) Zwingli and his colleagues no longer objected. They did not raise their

28 Art. 7 of the same *Ratschlag*. Art. 6 had advocated daily preaching and communion as an immediate replacement of daily mass.

29 Wolfgang Joner, Abbot of Kappel; Heinrich Brennwald, Provost of Embrach, and Conrad Schmid, Comtur at Küssnacht. This commission of fourteen men was delegated at other times as well to deal with religious matters.

30 *Ratschlag*, No. II., *ZW* II, 811ff.

voices, they did not instigate further popular commotion, they did not as they had promised offer bread and wine to those who so desired on Christmas Day of 1523, and they continued to celebrate Mass for sixteen more months.

It would thus appear that it was in the period of barely a week between the two memoranda—the first was written after the disorders of the 10th and the second before the Council session of the 19th—that the back of Zwingli's firm resolve was broken. It can hardly be mere coincidence that it was just at this date, namely in a letter dated December 18, that Conrad Grebel expressed his first clear criticism of Zwingli. In mock debating style he proclaimed the thesis he was prepared to defend:

> Whoever thinks, believes, or says that Zwingli is performing his duties as a Shepherd, thinks, believes, and speaks ungodly.[31]

This indignation at Zwingli's present compromise has led Grebel to see as well that its seeds were already present in October, namely in the utterly unrealistic distinction between matters of principle and of application which had been accepted there. He now believes that "the Word was overthrown, trampled upon, and enslaved by its most learned heralds" in the course of the disputation, even though he himself had not seen this at the time, having accepted in good faith Zwingli's assurance that the Council would act soon. The Zürich Council was doing nothing new in taking upon itself religious authority; this it had been doing increasingly for decades, and the friends of the Reformation, Grebel among them, were quite happy that it did so in November 1522 (Zwingli's employment as pastor) and January 1523 (the first disputation). Only when the state acted *against* the Reformation could the problem of the state as such be posed. This happened between October and December, as the Council first delayed and then refused completely to take measures which were clearly necessary. Only at this point could the religious leaders be expected to clarify their own positions. Zwingli accepted the state's refusal, and thus revealed that his announced willingness to stand by his convictions come what may "or stand condemned as a liar" had only been a bluff. Grebel chose the other path, preferring Zwingli's intentions to his actions. Once this issue was clear he could see that it had already been latently present in October.[32]

31 Von Mural and Schmid, *op. cit.*, Nr. 8, p. 8. Grebel's use of the term "shepherd" is in all probability a direct play on the theme of Zwingli's October sermon (cf. note 22 above).

32 The transcript of the October debates had just appeared on or soon after Dec. 8. This was an added reason—especially if the record had been tampered with (see note 21 above)—for Grebel to re-evaluate that disputation in the light of the Council's victory over Zwingli in December.

Zwingli cannot have made the decision he did without some kind of inner crisis. To take a course which he had warned, just one week earlier, would involve unfaithfulness to the Word of God, cannot have been easy for him, nor can it have been easy to live with this decision during the months that followed. It is thus not surprising that Zwingli worked out a new justification for what he had done. He refers to it clearly some three years later when asked for advice by the Bern reformers Haller and Kolb. "The Lord's Supper should not be introduced hurriedly," he counsels them, because of the danger that one part of the city will be celebrating Mass and the other the Lord's Supper. This breach of unity in the form of worship would be worse than the offense involved in having no evangelical communion at all. Thus it is better to maintain the Mass unitedly until it becomes possible, having won the unequivocal support of the state, to abolish it unitedly. Otherwise there might be uncontrollable conventicles hidden in every corner and no means of eliminating them. "This the Lord revealed to me, when the Mass was to be abolished among us [at Zürich]."[33] This is the only point found in the course of the writer's study of the writings of Zwingli where the Reformer claims in this way to have received divine revelation bearing upon a particular problem of his strategy of reformation. Such a claim to exceptional and immediate divine sanction for his program does not usually seem necessary to Zwingli, in view of his great confidence in the clarity and efficacy of the Word of God. That he makes this unusual claim just at this point is a strong hint that he must have been aware he was making a fundamental shift in his position which he could not justify otherwise.

Up until the two memoranda of December 1523 Zwingli conceived of the Lord's Supper as something essential to the life of the Christian and of the church. His reason for its introduction, according to the first memorandum, is that the pastors no longer have the right to withhold the Lord's Supper from those who desire it. This memorandum provided for the *daily* celebration of communion. But from December 1523 on the Lord's Supper is first of all something one can get along without. It is less important than maintaining the unity of the whole people through uniform religious observance.[34] This is the first and theologically the deepest change Zwingli had made. But another was more immediately important at the time.

33 Zwingli's letter to Berchtold Haller and Franz Kolb, October 11, 1527, *ZW* IX, 281ff.

34 This fact, just as much as if not more than Zwingli's platonistically and stoically colored humanism, is behind his exceptionally shallow concept of communion. Zürich had no evangelical communion except that of the Anabaptists until April 1525; St. Gall went without until 1527 and Bern until 1528. Even then most reformed cities celebrated communion only four times a year. Zwingli's low view of the Lord's Supper was the only way he could explain the low value he gave it in working out his reformation strategy.

This argument of Zwingli's abandons tolerance as a strategy of reformation. Both December memoranda had been ready, in view of the urgency of the institution of the Lord's Supper, to accept the continued observation of the Mass, so that both forms of worship would be going on side by side. Zwingli now expressly rejects this readiness as involving the sacrifice of that unity of the entire people which must be maintained above all else,[35] even, if need be, above true communion.

By thus seeing the basic nature of Zwingli's shift in position we have at the same time found the crux of Grebel's clash with him. To place the unity of Zürich above the faithfulness of the church is not only to abandon the church; it is also the demonization of the state, for persecution becomes a theological necessity. The suppression of dissent is for the Zwinglian Reformation from this point on not an unfortunate expedient but a matter of faith. Grebel did not reject the state as an agent of the church as long as there was some hope that it might carry through the Reformation on a basis of tolerance. Grebel's and Mantz's own proposals to Zwingli also had involved the use of the state.[36] But when at the same time Zwingli accepted that the state should not have to carry through the Reformation immediately, and insisted that it should be intolerant for reasons of principle, Anabaptism had become a necessity even though infant baptism had as yet not become an issue.

35 Incidentally this observation permits a nearer understanding of what Zwingli meant in saying "the Lord revealed to me." The "revelation" involved the insight that tolerance is wrong. The second December memorandum however still accepted tolerance as a method. Thus we may not understand "revelation" as referring to any particular experience of Zwingli's just at the time between the two memoranda when he was making his crucial decision to surrender to the Council. It is therefore most likely to mean a retrospective evaluation of the entire experience and its outcome, once it became clear that he would have to get along without communion for some time. Ironically it was probably the house meetings of the Anabaptists more than the danger of clandestine Masses which reinforced Zwingli in his high view of the unity of observance. Likewise it was probably the house meetings of the Anabaptists, who began celebrating the Lord's Supper in January 1525, more than Zwingli's teaching, which led the Zürich Council finally to accept the introduction of a Protestant communion service in April 1525.

36 Blanke, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN THE POLITICAL SITUATION

ELMER NEUFELD*

I. *Introductory.* Apparently a primary reason for an invitation to my participation in this conference is the several years of work with the NSBRO in Washington, D.C., the place seen as the epitome of political activity and simultaneously by many people as the extreme in corruption and immorality.[1] Perhaps it is permissible, therefore, to speak at least in part somewhat experientially, in the form of a testimony or confession rather than in a series of systematic arguments.

1. Like many others here, I was reared in a typically sheltered and withdrawn Mennonite community, in my case in the home of a lay minister. I shall always have a deep appreciation for (and perhaps a yearning to return to) the simple Christian faith and practice and the mutuality of believers experienced in this background. Yet, though in some of our writings such a community may theologically be called Christocentric, the years came when one began to wonder why it then included only the names of Russian Mennonites like ourselves—why its confines seemed to be ethnic rather than spiritual.

2. Then followed the World War II experience as an eighteen-year-old conscientious objector to war, young and rather confident that he had embodied the adequate Christian answer to sin and hate and war, but at the same time quite unaware of personal participation in similar attitudes toward others or of any responsibility of his own people to have established peaceful relations which might have affected the course of events. Yet increasingly one became aware that as conscientious objectors we were conveniently removed from the scenes of actual war atrocities, and that our roles did not involve the Christian suffering and sacrifice we talked about.

3. College, although again in an essentially sheltered environment, provided the intellectual stimulation to resolve the uneasiness about withdrawal by an optimistic synthesis of Christian love and political reform through socialism, the Progressive Party, or nonviolent schemes of action. It took later experience to bring the realization that this could only be done at the expense of an adequate understanding of the nature of our society (its sinfulness, selfishness,

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1 Note for example: "The words 'politics' and 'politician' already contain a moral judgment just like the word 'murder'." David Janzen, "Are We Selling Our Birthright?" *The Canadian Mennonite,* Nov. 9, 1956.

nationalism, and pride), the need for personal rebirth in Christ, the locus of the new life in the church, etc.

4. The Washington experience, involving direct encounter with political and especially military personnel—as well as with Christian lobbyists—focused the conflict more sharply than ever before. I could not always be certain that it was a tribute to us that Selective Service found it easier to get along with the Mennonites than with other pacifist groups. I could not always find an adequate reason why we freely testified in defense of our own religious liberties but had little to say about the liberties of others. Still ringing in my ears are the words of a now-deceased army colonel: "You Mennonites are fine folk to get along with. We like you. It would be nice if there were more people like you. But . . . you do nothing about sin, about social wrong, about corruption in government, about international tensions, etc."

5. Transfer to a secular department of study at the University of Chicago primarily changed the context of the above tensions. Here again there were severe criticisms of the role played by the so-called Christian church in social and political problems. On the one hand there have been harsh criticisms of naive attempts to apply Christian standards to political problems.[2] On the other hand there have been factual observations that today most Christians do not try to mix their religion and their politics. For example, John Dewey observed that "nowhere in the world at any time has religion been so thoroughly respectable as with us, and so nearly totally disconnected from life."[3] This kind of separation agrees well with the popular notion that our obligations to the government are unqualified.[4]

6. Last, but not least, is our residence for the last several years at the Mennonite Seminary in the vast Negro community of Chicago's South Side. Although for us as a General Conference church this involvement seems to have been largely for other reasons rather than by deliberate choice—thus leaving us in a faltering position about continuation—perhaps it was after all more than coincidence that this happened during the very period when the South is being torn by racial hatred, fear, and open violence. In the Woodlawn community we have sought to express the reconciling love of Christ in our personal relations and through the traditional program of the church;

2 See for example such writings as the following: Frank Knight, "Religion and Ethics in Modern Civilization," in *Freedom and Reform* (New York, 1947); and Hans Kelsen, "Foundations of Democracy," *Ethics*, October 1955.

3 John Dewey, *Individualism Old and New* (New York, 1930) 14.

4 Esko Loewen: "As it is today, the popular mind would hold that loyalty to the state must be unquestioned, any religious affiliation that you may have is a private matter which may serve the needs of a person, but it is not ultimate." "The Theological Basis of Political Participation or Non-participation," paper presented to Conference on Political Responsibility, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

but we have had little to say about the physical, educational, and social needs of the Negroes—the unfair housing practices, the inadequate schools, or the social and vocational disabilities they continue to suffer because of prejudice. Rather than proclaiming the righteousness of God for the guidance of our government, we have been trailing behind the ideals set forth in its legal capacity.

Now, let me immediately agree that the tension with the "world" reflected in all of the above experiences should be expected by one who has "hid in his heart" the Christian hope which the world neither seriously accepts or understands. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18). Or again, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17). But the above experiences are to suggest that there seems to be a confusion here—that perhaps after all in practice we have used a legitimate and important teaching (separation from the world) to escape responsibilities that are clearly ours within the gospel of Christ. Perhaps, after all, as Paul Lehman suggested to us at the Manchester Peace Conference of 1956, *the community of the holy* (of a select ethnic group) has persisted and distorted *the holy community,* doing so by a kind of pharisaic perfectionism. Or again, taking a slightly different view, although we have freely justified a certain withdrawal from social and political problems, we have not apparently been living in any unique fulfillment of the kingdom of God or in a unique expectancy of its final coming. Rather we have generally seemed to be occupied much like society at large.

Perhaps in this context, among ourselves, it is not so important that we be preoccupied in defending our faith against rival theologies and reassuring ourselves in our present positions, as it is that we look again honestly and self-critically at ourselves, in the light of the Christian Gospel.

II. *Basic Considerations.*—The program suggests an attempt to divide into several areas the question of our responsibility to the state —the nature of the state, the church's responsibility in the world, the historic Anabaptist position, the witness to government, and the prophetic witness. It nevertheless seems inevitable to touch on most or all of these to provide some basis for what one should like to say more specifically.

The question of our Christian responsibility in the political order is but one area of the larger question of the Christian's relationship to the "world" (in the sense of John 15:19, for example), the

Christian and culture. Parallel questions are those of our involvement in modern business and economic life, in scientific and technical developments, in intellectual pursuits, in the arts and music, and perhaps even in the institutional church. (This is not to suggest that the prevailing involvement in these other areas can be assumed as our norm, but that we should examine honestly the basis for complete participation in some areas while disavowing others.) Therefore it seems appropriate briefly (although too simply) to place this question into the context of our relevant basic Christian convictions.

1. *Creation.* God created the world and it was good (Gen. 1).[5] This may need emphasis, lest our attempt to separate from the "world" and its ways also wrongly involve a rejection of God's creation, thus misleading us to some kind of asceticism. In a given situation, however, it may be difficult to know what is nature as an inherent part of God's creative intent and what, on the other hand, is a product of human culture and thus participating in its imperfection and sinfulness.[6]

2. *Man's Sin.* By man's individual choice and through transmission in society there is a prevalence of sin and evil in the world (James 1:13-17; Psalm 51:5; Rom. 5:12; Eph. 2:3, etc.). This sin, along with the good, finds its expression in what is called man's culture. Thus the world of God's creation has been defiled; it is no longer wholly good and pure. And in the process man has been estranged from God.

3. *Redemption.* Throughout human history God has been seeking to redeem mankind—to reconcile man to Himself. "I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God" (Ex. 6:6, 7). God's saving grace was manifested most fully in the redemptive work of Christ (Luke 1:68; Heb. 9:12). In Christ we have not only reconciliation with God in the sense of forgiveness, but also a new life. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

4. *The Church.* Yet Christ came not only to reconcile individuals to himself, but to separate unto himself a people (Acts 20;28; I Cor. 1:2; Eph. 5; etc.). This people, as a group of believers, is under the dual injunction to be separate and holy and yet to go forth and witness. Thus arises the problem of a group of Christians separate

5 We must not be misled by the dual sense of the word "world" as used in the Bible and related writings. I shall place the word in quotation marks when it is used in the sense of human culture or civilization.

6 For example, it would appear that some kind of social and political organization is inevitably involved in man's existence. Thus Aristotle argues that man is "by nature" a political being.

and distinct from society at large, yet having a responsibility to that society and in many ways, perhaps unwittingly, a product of it.[7]

5. *The State.* An overarching aspect of the culture out of which the Christian has been called is the political state. (*a*) With more truth than we have sometimes realized, the Bible characterizes the state as the bearer of the sword (Rom. 13:4; cf. I Peter 2:14). This is a truth more readily understood by the early Anabaptists than by us today. It has also been clearly understood by various political philosophers. That a basic sanction of government even in a democratic society is police and military power should also again be clearer to us from the recent Arkansas integration case.

(*b*) Note also a closely related fact: although in certain periods of history the state has affirmed its responsibility under God (or to natural law), it inevitably seeks to establish itself as sovereign, especially in times of crisis. We might note, for example, that even conscientious objection in our own country is from a governmental point of view only a privilege which Congress indulgently allows rather than a right which we enjoy even constitutionally.

(*c*) Furthermore, the political activity of the state has been characterized as the art of compromise. In a sense this is especially true of a democratic state where decisions are made by widespread discussion and then compromise. Political decisions must therefore involve an element of expediency rather than "absolute" morality. Certain recent political theorists have strongly defended this kind of relativism in political decision making and especially in the major political parties, some even going so far as to suggest that the Civil War was caused by a too rigid idealism.

Each of these three characteristics of the state poses serious problems for the Christian in his relation to government.

(*d*) In some contrast to the first point, we should also note that the modern democratic state, with which we are most concerned, has assumed widespread responsibilities in addition to those suggested in the New Testament—in education, transportation and communication, health and welfare, research, in agriculture and industry, etc.

6. *Eschatology.* There is at least one further dimension in this conflict between the church and the state. The state, at least in so far as it is non-Christian, tends to look for the fulfilment of history in the kingdoms of this world, whereas the hope of the church is fixed on an eternal relationship to God (Matt. 6:19-20; 10;28; etc.). The state by its very nature seeks to preserve the developments of culture, to

7 The extent to which we are a part of and simply assume our culture is reflected even in this place of meeting—an immense edifice in one of our largest cities, the product of cultural developments in science, art, governmental planning, a complex church institution, etc.

which the Christian may be strangely indifferent. Inevitably one's experience and convictions about the nearness or remoteness of a transcendent kingdom will have some bearing on attitudes and evaluations in the present.[8]

III. *General Types of Answers Given.*—The foregoing considerations suggest a deep cleavage between the church and the state, between the Christian and political government—because of the political importance of police and military power, because of the question of divided or unqualified loyalty, because of the difference in ethical standards and approach, and because of the basic difference in ultimate hope—in what is finally important. To set forth more clearly the generally accepted Mennonite position, we shall recall briefly what general types of answers have been given to the question of this relationship. This brief outline will generally adopt the characterizatioons set forth by John C. Bennett and Richard Niebuhr.[9] We should remember that no typology is adequate to the individual case; it is a tool to help us understand.

If we imagine a political government or the "world" on the one hand and on the other the church, the individual can obviously make several general choices about the relationship of these two realms in his life. He may simply accept the "world" and reject Christ (this choice has no place in our typology). He may simply deny the dichotomy between the church and the "world," seeking to hold on to both. He may choose to participate in both realms although recognizing the dual nature of his actions. He may seek to develop some further synthesis of the two realms. Or, finally, he may emphasize unqualified loyalty to Christ and essentially reject the "world."

1. *The Christ of Culture Position* (Niebuhr) or *The Identification of Christianity with Particular Social Programs* (Bennett). The person who takes this position is in an important sense denying that there is such a problem as we have suggested; he is denying that there is such a basic cleavage and sharp tension between the church and the "world." As the above characterizations suggest, he identifies the best in society—his social program for its improvement—with the kingdom of Christ. To do this he tends to be selective in his reading of the Bible, emphasizing primarily the moral teachings of Jesus rather than the claims about His divinity. He tends to look for the fulfillment of history in the kingdoms of this "world" rather than expecting a cata-

8 Richard Niebuhr: "The significant question to be asked about Christians in this respect is not whether they think historically or mystically about the Kingdom of God; but rather whether they are convinced of its nearness and are governed by this conviction, or whether they think of it as relatively remote in time or space and relatively ineffective in power." *Christ and Culture* (New York, 1951) 65.

9 John C. Bennett, *Christian Ethics and Social Policy* (New York, 1956); H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture.*

clysmic event when the kingdom of Christ will be established in its fullness.

Perhaps the earliest example of such a position is that of the New Testament Jews who expected Christ to establish an earthly kingdom, to become a political leader of the nation Israel. Gnosticism is referred to as one of the clearest historical examples, and more recently the most general exemplification has been among the liberal groups in modern Protestantism. More specifically, a similar position is taken by the person who identifies Christianity with a social program of pacifism and sees in this the solution to the needs of the world.

In spite of the attempt to identify Christianity with the best in culture, the obvious danger is that Christ be lost in the process—that His Gospel is perverted. Richard Niebuhr summarizes the criticisms of this position as follows:

> But whether few or many they become the basis of the charge that loyalty to contemporary culture has so far qualified the loyalty to Christ that he has been abandoned in favor of an ideal called by his name.[10]

2. *Christ and Culture in Paradox* (Niebuhr), *or The Double Standard for Personal and Public Life* (Bennett). The person who chooses this position is the opposite of the foregoing in that he sees clearly the deep cleavage between the church and the state—between the nature of the Christian life as revealed by Christ on the one hand, and what is possibly in society on the other. He is generally pessimistic about the level of morality possible in political life. But for him this does not mean that the Christian cannot fully participate in politics; it only means that he must not attempt to apply the distinctively Christian standards to public problems. In other words, he sees the church and the "world" as basically set apart but chooses to engage freely in both. In making this choice he emphasizes our Christian obligation to be subject to government. He is a man with two hats, one to wear as a Christian in the church and in personal relations, and the other to wear in public life, politics, etc.

There is perhaps hardly a church body that clearly exemplifies this position in its extremes. But it is not so uncommon in actual experience or in personal rationalizations. Bennett quotes a clear statement of this position made by a German Lutheran theologian during the war:

> Christianity has neither a political program, nor any inclination to control or censure the political life in the name of Jesus and the Gospels. No Christian law, no Christian standard, exists for the State or

10 Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

for Politics. The order of the kingdom of God is on a different plane from that of the political order. The latter cannot conform to the former.[11]

Several serious objections to this position are apparent. Most seriously, the life of the Christian is split asunder. Only in part is it subject to Christ—only in part is it a life of Christian discipleship. The balance of that life, and the political order in which it participates, are left unguided by the Gospel. The state is left autonomous because it may not be censured in the name of Christ.

3. *Christ above Culture* (Niebuhr),[12] *or Catholic Strategy* (Bennett). The Catholic choice is an attempt to develop a further synthesis between the church and the state. As such it is much too complex for adequate treatment here, perhaps also largely irrelevant for our purposes. In a sense, of course, this immense and powerful cultural institution, the Catholic Church, is itself the state. In any case it is the church in its ecclesiastical authority that makes many of the difficult ethical decisions for the individual; e.g., whether he should support a given war effort, i.e., whether it is just or not. But in exercising this authority the church appeals not only to Biblical revelation, but also to natural law as known to human reason; in this sense it is optimistic about man's condition and capacities. Yet the Catholic church also acknowledges the prevalence of sin in the "world"—and even in the church—but the sacraments and the doctrine of grace function to ease much of the tension. Those who seek a purer life may enter monastic orders and remove themselves from many of the cultural involvements.

Perhaps the most serious defect in the Catholic position is the centrality of what is after all a vast human institution, itself fraught with much of the corruption of society at large and too optimistic about man's rational ability to discern natural law. Furthermore, the monastic life itself is a reflection on those others in the church whose lives are not affected by a similarly serious commitment to Christ in personal discipleship.

4. *Christ against Culture* (Niebuhr), *or The Strategy of Withdrawal* (Bennett).[13] Finally, recognizing the conflict between the church and the "world," the Christian may emphasize unequivocal loyalty to Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, and simultaneously reject participation in the affairs of this "world." Like the second po-

11 Bennett, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

12 Niebuhr makes this category broad enough to include not only Catholicism but also other groups in what he calls the church of the center.

13 The dichotomy of withdrawal versus responsibility or relevance tends to be a loaded and perhaps question-begging one, unless the context is clearly defined. The general question is not whether we assume responsibility or not, but rather for whom or for what and in what manner.

sition, that of the double standard, this position is pessimistic about the level of morality possible in the state. However, in contrast to that position, it asserts that the Christian must therefore give undivided loyalty to Christ; there can be no double standard for the Christian. Note that both positions involve a strong dualism between the morality of the church and the morality of the state, but the position here considered does not accept the dualism between what the individual does as a Christian and what he does according to the standards of society in the state.

Certain of the Catholic monastic orders have probably effected the most complete withdrawal from the "world." However, monasticism was accompanied by the recognition of other acceptable types of Christian life. This the sectarian groups like our own have never granted. It is rather the Mennonite belief that serious discipleship, which rejects the standards of the "world," constitutes the only true Christian life. I shall quote one modern Mennonite statement which boldly adopts this position:

> The Christian's commonwealth is in heaven. He can therefore have no allegiance to another commonwealth. The Scriptures do not speak of any area of a Christian's life that is under the jurisdiction of another authority. The Christian has no need for civil government. While historically Christians have always found themselves in some sort of relationship to civil government, whether under Roman imperialism, Nazi totalitarianism, Russian communistic socialism, African barbarism, or American democracy, nevertheless they have no responsibility to erect an authority outside of the church to serve some unprovided area of life. Their heavenly citizenship is all inclusive. This is not to take a utopian view of things; rather it only stresses the totality of the Lordship of Christ in His Kingdom throughout the Church.[14]

Those of us here should be well acquainted with the criticisms directed against this position. It has often been accused of a legalistic selfrighteousness. The critics have insisted that the attempted separation from the sins of the "world" is itself illusory, if for no other reason than the guilt of omission. This position has been perpetually criticized for simply neglecting serious social and political problems, while at the same time complacently reaping benefits from those who do become involved.

An important part of the problem, to which we shall refer later, would be the nature of this withdrawal. In what sense are we to be separate? What is it that we are to be separated from?[15]

14 Chester K. Lehman, "Biblical Perspectives on Christianity and the State," paper presented at Conference on Nonresistance and Political Responsibility, Laurelville, Pa., Sept. 21-22, 1956.

15 Niebuhr and Bennett each treat one more general type of approach—Christ the Transformer of Culture (Niebuhr) and The Relevance of Christian Ethics to Social Policy (Ben-

IV. *Guiding Principles.*—1. Considering the unfathomable love of God—the unsearchability of His ways and the extreme complexity of modern culture, we should view with caution any human attempt to set forth precisely and conclusively the limits of our social responsibility. It seems inevitable that such an attempt will reflect less than God's purpose for us. It can so readily be used as a rationalization for our own hidden motives, especially to relieve the sensitivity of Christian conscience (Heb. 9:14). I am keenly aware that such caution must also apply to the present paper, and am more and more uncertain, in fact, whether we ought attempt to give a rigorous answer to a problem of this nature. How can we predict what form the expression of Christian love will take when moved by genuine compassion or deeply disturbed about social injustice? Love is after all not a logical principle, but rather a spiritual force which constrains us (II Cor. 5:14).[16] From a rational view, surely the woman who anointed Jesus with costly perfumes did a rather foolish thing, but Jesus recognized her act as an expression of love. We need to remain sensitive and flexible enough to respond to God's leading, and this seems more likely to result from penitent worship than from scholarly endeavors to determine the rationale of our responsibility.[17]

2. Having said the foregoing, it is nevertheless apparent that we need to seek criteria to serve as general guides and to guard against the extremes of individual interpretation and discretion.[18] As Christians we seek to establish such criteria through study of the Scriptures, prayerful submission to the leading of the Spirit, examination among the believers, etc. Thus we will have sessions like this one as did the early Christians described in Acts 15. It is in this spirit that I venture to suggest certain guiding principles.

3. Believing that the Christian church as the kingdom of Christ —made up of those who have entered a new life with Him (II Cor. 1:2)—is essentially distinct from the kingdoms of this world (John 18:36; Matt. 4:8-10, etc.), we will never identify our Christian mission with any social or political program. (Perhaps it needs to be said specifically in our case that we will not identify Christianity with any programs of pacifism or nonviolence.) Nor will our ultimate hope be placed in the political order. We will therefore at times re-

nett). However, these are in effect their own syntheses developed through consideration of the other types. For our purposes of a fairly simple framework of comparison, we shall not consider them explicitly.

16 Cf. Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice* (London, 1954).

17 One might call the above an existential emphasis, but the term may not be very helpful.

18 Tillich, for example, in a recent discussion stressed the importance of an existentialist approach, but then nevertheless observed that many of the Continental existentialists seemed to have acted wrongly during the war years. Cf. Whitehead: "Religion requires a metaphysical backing, for its authority is endangered by the intensity of the emotions which it generates." *Religion in the Making* (Cambridge, 1927) 71.

flect a certain indifference about the values established in culture. This rejects the "Christ of Culture" position outlined above (III, 1).

4. Believing further that the commitment of Christian faith involves discipleship which subjects all areas of life to the authority of Christ, we will not resort to non-Christian or autonomous moral standards for our guidance in such areas as politics where the demands of the Gospel sometimes seem peculiarly inapplicable. (This rejects the kind of dualism set forth in the second position above, "Christ and Culture in Paradox.") This does not imply an attempt to naively apply literal Biblical commands to the social and political order. In so far as there is direct participation it will need to involve the insights of economists, social scientists, political theorists, etc. It does mean that our ultimate motivations and our ultimate moral judgments are to be found within the Christian faith.

5. Realizing that the political order is ever dependent on the sanctions of the sword, that governments by their very nature claim authority to punish lawbreakers and to resort to military might when internal or international order breaks down, the nonresistant Christian must realize that there are certain basic functions of government which he cannot assume. It is naive for us to think that political government could be operated entirely on the basis of Christian nonresistance.[19] This does not mean that the Christian is absolved from involvement in and guilt for the situation that has developed. But it does involve the conviction that the weapons of our warfare are not of this "world" (II Cor. 10:4). In this sense I am here affirming the historic two-kingdom dualism or doctrine.[20]

6. On the other extreme, complete separation from culture is equally impossible. We are after all in the "world." The very language we speak, the very forms of our thought are shaped by our culture. Even in our church bureaucracies we have adopted many of the techniques and problems of political activity. Yet we should not be deluded into thinking that our Mennonite communities are separate in the sense of themselves performing the essential functions of the state. This is simply not the case. (Some of the Hutterite colonies come closer to such separation, but even such community living is not free from basic involvements with the larger state; e.g., in property rights and economic relations.) Our guiding purpose, however,

19 This leaves us with the question about the kind of moral guidance available in those very areas, like the military and police actions, which the Christian may acknowledge as necessary for the existence of government, but which he personally declines to assume. To what extent dare we leave those responsible for these most dangerous areas autonomous? Must they appeal to norms outside of Christianity, or do Christians even here have a prophetic function? See Part V, 2.

20 See especially Robert Friedmann, "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds," in *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottdale, 1957).

is not the highest possible degree of separation from the "world," but rather faithfulness to God in the redemptive work of His kingdom (I Cor. 3:9; Matt. 10:39).

7. Somewhere in between these extremes are vast areas of governmental life, from local school boards to the World Health Organization, which are *no more closely* dependent on the police and military sanctions of our government than the activities in which we participate freely from day to day. It also seems fallacious to assume that governmental functions which involve problems of social justice necessarily preclude the possibility of personal expressions of Christian love and self-sacrifice. Brunner has emphasized that "we never meet other people merely within the orders."[21] The important question here is what legitimate motivation the Christian might have to participate.

8. From the fact that our unqualified loyalty is to Christ in the church rather than to national governments, it does not follow that the Christian has no responsibility to that government or outside the church. From the fact of unqualified discipleship it has sometimes been argued that the Christian should have no relationship with an external authority like the government. Yes, our allegiance to Christ is to be unqualified, but we must still ask what this very allegiance demands of us in relationship to the "world." The question then is not whether the state has some right to divert some of our allegiance from Christ, but whether our Christian allegiance itself involves social and political responsibilities.

9. One of the most important criteria guiding our relation to political activities will therefore be the motivation. The question of participation is not properly one about the extent of Christian liberty—a question of how far we may pursue personal ambitions without straining our relationship to Christ and the church. The lusts for political power, social prestige, financial success, and even nationalistic interests have no legitimate place in this decision. Nor should this question be decided by default, by social drift or acculturation. Then we will participate, but in the wrong way and for the wrong purposes. The question is rather what legitimate function we have in government. Like Paul we must seek that one thing that determined the nature of his whole life (Phil. 3:13). Surely this one thing is that ministry of reconciliation of which he speaks in II Cor. 5:18-19.

10. This ministry of reconciliation includes personal evangelism and preaching of the Gospel, but also simple and forthright acts of

21 Emil Brunner, *The Divine Imperative* (New York, 1937) 227-8.

compassion for those in physical, social, emotional or educational needs; it includes proclaiming the righteousness of God, convicting men of sin. Too narrow an interpretation of this ministry has made even our Master himself stand often outside its scope, and has resulted in persons accusing the church of greater concern for the number of souls won than genuine love for the individual person and his lot. Lawrence Burkholder has said the following about the breadth of this ministry:

> The extent of Christ's reconciling work is stated in Col. 1:20. 'And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.' This means that the work of reconciliation is as broad as the Lordship of Christ, which extends into all creation (Col. 1:16).[22]

11. The converse of the danger of neglecting social needs is the danger of losing sight of the individual in his need for personal reconciliation with God. There is a tendency for the "lobbyist" to view government officials primarily as means or obstacles to some desirable political actions and fail to see them also as individuals who personally need Christ. Thus it seems especially appropriate that our peace section secretary has been engaged in a personal ministry to one whom we have often contacted for other purposes in his official capacity.

12. The nature and extent of our political participation will depend not only on our spiritual motivation and understanding of the Christian mission, but also on the nature of the specific social or political situation. We should expect, for example, that God might lead us differently in democratic America than he did the early Anabaptists. Our situation is different both in terms of the functions assumed by government and in terms of our acceptance by the government.[23] On the one hand we should not enter into political life by social drift; on the other hand we should not stay out by tradition!

13. Because the Christian's supreme loyalty is to God rather than to the state and because of the elements of compromise and expediency in political decision making, the Christian who participates must inevitably expect certain tensions, and disabilities. In fact, if these are absent it is very doubtful whether he is performing an ap-

22 J. Lawrence Burkholder, "Exercising the Ministry of Reconciliation," *Gospel Herald*, Aug. 2, 1955, 721-22.

23 For both of these points see J. Winfield Fretz, "Should Mennonites Participate in Politics?" *Mennonite Life*, July 1956: "One real reason why neither the apostolic Christians nor the sixteenth century Anabaptists participated in government is that they had no opportunity. In both instances they were considered heretics and hence enemies of the then existing state. Furthermore the monarchial types of government then in existence didn't give citizens any choice in the matter. Citizens in those days didn't 'run for political office.' If they were members of persecuted minorities they had to run from both political office and officers" (p. 139).

propriate function. The character of Christian participation in politics has been stated well by Esko Loewen:

> When the Christian assumes public duty without any illusions as to what he is doing, recognizing the agonizing tensions he will have to endure between what he knows to be Christian judgment and the demands of the body politic, and so long as these tensions remain sharp for him so that he is primarily dedicated to serving God rather than man—so that he is in the world but not of it—state service is a possibility for the Christian.[24]

Political participation for the committed Christian will therefore inevitably have an aspect of contingency; the Christian must go with a sense of Christian mission, and must be ready to return when a complete impasse is reached.

14. In seeking to understand and meet political problems, the Christian should always be especially sensitive to the possible need for solutions that are non-governmental, and realize his peculiar responsibility to find solutions at a more personal and spiritual level. Certain problems can simply not be met by laws which are primarily effective because of military sanctions. André Trocmé, in speaking to some 2000 youth on November 3, 1957, emphasized the fact that many of the problems of the world today simply have no solution at the generally understood political level. A new dimension, that of faith in Christ, must be brought in.[25] Thus, as Lawrence Burkholder has suggested, we should especially look for "nonpolitical ways of political relevance."[26]

15. Finally, in applying Christian faith to specific social and political problems we must expect a considerable amount of uncertainty, ambiguity, and difference of opinion. It is folly to assume that we have easy and simple answers at this level. Some of the most astute observers of political planning are today very pessimistic about our ability to foresee the consequences of large-scale social changes.[27] We might, for example, urge the sending of surplus grain to a needy nation and in so doing seriously upset the nation's economy. Thus there is need for much humility and charity in the differences arising at this level.

V. *Types of Relevance to the Political Situation.*—The possible kinds of relevance or witness to the political situation might be differentiated from at least two points of view, the specific motivation or purpose involved and, on the other hand, the form taken in the expression of this concern. We have suggested on the one hand that our

24 "Church and State," *Mennonite Life*, July 1956, 142.
25 See André Trocmé, *The Politics of Repentance* (New York, 1953).
26 Burkholder, *op. cit.*, 741.
27 E.g., Frank Knight, "The Planful Act: The Possibilities and Limitations of Collective Rationability," in *Freedom and Reform.*

very discipleship to Christ may compel us to assume certain responsibilities in the political situation; this needs to be elaborated. On the other hand we have suggested that certain forms of participation will involve us in situations of impossible conflict and force withdrawal. A deep concern about the dangers of continued A-bomb testing might, for example, presumably seek expression in the form of prayer, letter writing, poster walks, or congressional testimony. Implicitly we therefore ask ourselves two questions regarding a given situation: (1) what motivates us to take action (or the closely related question, what do we wish to accomplish); (2) how may we accomplish this purpose—what form can our expression of concern take.[28] And then, relative to the possible form of expression we obviously consider whether it is in keeping with our total Christian mission.

In the above I am suggesting a kind of functional attitude toward government rather than attempting to define it in some general and abstract way.[29] In other words, we will be mainly concerned with the consequences of possible political actions, as these consequences result in benefit or detriment to the persons or groups affected. Paul, for example, although not generally occupied with political problems, *used* the Roman government in appealing to Caesar when it seemed advantageous to do so (Acts 25:11).

1. *Types of Relevance According to the Specific Motivation.* In a general sense perhaps our motivation and our purpose are both single; our motivation is the love of Christ, our purpose is His ministry of reconciliation. But more specifically this ministry does seem to have several aspects, though closely interrelated ones.

(*a*) *Relevance on the Evangelistic Level.*[30] There is a respect in which all Mennonite groups, except for the most completely ingrown ones, have always considered their Gospel relevant to the political situation—in the appeal to all persons, including government officials, to yield themselves personally to the claims of Christ. This kind of relevance is clearly portrayed in the life of Paul. That he saw political rulers themselves in this perspective, in their personal need of Christ, is most evident from the conversation with King Agrippa (Acts 26).

28 I have avoided the customary means-ends distinction because it tends to suggest a rather rigorous idealistic approach, rather than an existential one, and perhaps also suggests too complete and clear a distinction between the two aspects.

29 See John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York, 1927); e.g., "The characteristic of the public as a state springs from the fact that all modes of associated behavior may have extensive and enduring consequences which involve others beyond those directly engaged in them."

30 For the characterizations of the Evangelistic and Prophetic levels I have borrowed directly from a paper by Irvin Horst, "Some Principles and Limitations Guiding the Christian Witness to the State," presented at Laurelville Conference, Sept. 21-22, 1956. See also Paul Peachey, "A Message to the President," *Gospel Herald*, Oct. 18, 1955.

In setting forth the other levels I do not wish to suggest that they are sharply distinct from evangelism, but rather that evangelism itself when adequately understood is not complete without the others. At the same time, a ministry of personal evangelism should be a natural part of the other aspects of our ministry. I believe the Mennonite Central Committee itself is founded on the conviction that these various aspects of the "Nachfolge Christi" are integrally related.

(*b*) *Relevance on the Prophetic Level.* Another level of relevance to the political situation which has been frequently discussed—apparently more discussed than exercised—in recent Mennonite writings is the prophetic one. As the name suggests, the dominant Biblical basis for this kind of witness is that of the Old Testament Prophets. Thus the word of the Lord came to the shepherd of Tekoa and he began to proclaim the righteousness of God and His judgment on the sins of Israel—"Thus saith the Lord. . . ." Jesus is also occasionally seen in this kind of role—in his discourse against the Pharisees and in his encounter with the money changers in the temple.

Basically this is the relevance of one who proclaims the righteousness of God and thus stands in judgment upon the sins of society. Such prophetic enunciations are seen as relevant even to those areas of governmental function which the prophet himself might be unwilling to assume—reminding the rulers of their responsibility under God, warning them against selfish exploitation, etc.[31] In fact, a certain independence from the political situation seems necessary to fill the prophetic role.[32] But beyond such general exhortations to those in authority, it is not clear what specific ethical guidance the Christian has to offer in those functions from which he is personally barred because Christian standards seem inapplicable. It seems that we wish to encourage the "highest" actions socially and politically possible, without knowing specifically on what grounds to do this, and without wishing to sanction such actions as the ultimate will of God for the persons involved.

Perhaps one of the most serious reflections regarding our relevance on the prophetic level is the observation that we hardly know how to engage in a prophetic witness in today's world.[33] Have we

31 Paul Peachey: "On the one hand we should witness to God's redeeming grace to men in all stations. On the other hand, men in authority, whatever their attitudes toward this redeeming grace, need to be reminded that they hold their authority under God. Their tasks is to maintain social order and not to enrich themselves or their nation by conquest or exploitation" (*op. cit.*, p. 993).

32 Lawrence Burkholder: "The duty of the church is to assert a measure of independence in accordance with its own being which admittedly governments do not enjoy but which is essential if the church will occupy a position above the level of sufferance. The responsibility of the church is to do a work which governments can not do but which is admittedly sufficiently politically relevant to provoke a measure of tension between Christ and Caesar" (*op. cit.*, 741-42).

33 Irvin Horst makes this kind of an observation in an honest and searching attitude—"The writer is frank to say that he does not understand on what basis such a witness can be

become like the conference discussion group that considered sin, guilt, and confession, agreeing on the importance of these, but coming back with the report that they did not know what to confess?[34]

(c) Relevance on the Empathic Level. It is a major purpose of this paper to emphasize a third level of relevance to the political situation. It grows out of that very understanding of the Gospel which we have so often claimed to emphasize—Christian love. I am thinking of those actions, political or otherwise, which grow not so much out of moral indignation or even out of conscious intent to secure confession of Christ, but rather out of simple and immediate empathy for people in their need—in their hunger, their nakedness and cold, their homelessness, their sickness and malnutrition, their social ostracism, their legal disabilities, their emotional problems, their lack of schools, etc.

Empathy is the ability to imagine or feel oneself in the situation of another. But this often seems so difficult in any genuine sense. Perhaps even this difficulty is a blessing; we are too weak and small to share the wounds of the world as fully as did our Savior. Yet could not the depth and breadth of our concerns well be extended? We occasionally avoid involvement in programs of social reform designed primarily to alleviate physical and material needs by telling ourselves reassuringly that our task is the preaching of the Gospel. Yet how many hours a day do we spend providing for the material needs of ourselves and our children? Somehow, in our own case groceries, homes, and schools for our children are in themselves important. Jesus in both his experience and teachings (e.g., the story of the Good Samaritan) was always sensitive to the physical and social needs of those about Him. The trouble is that the Korean war orphans and the American Negro who was recently castrated—just to "scare hell out of" Negroes seeking integration—are so far away from our Mennonite communities—or we from them!

Recall the World War II experience when a large number of conscientious objectors found employment in mental hospitals. There was tension, things inevitably began to happen—in cleaning up local hospital administrations, in the training of aides, in legislation to increase funds, etc. Sometimes these attempts to bring change re-

carried out today" (*op. cit.*, p. 45). Others have so thoroughly accepted our culture that they fail to see the problem.

34 Horst suggests a subdivision of three or possibly four types of prophetic witness: Firstly, to the basic nature of the institution of the state and the duty to maintain justice and preserve order. Secondly, it may pertain to the Christian concern for the welfare of all men wherein the State is involved or responsible. . . . Thirdly, it may pertain to pronouncements of judgment. . . . We might include a fourth type of prophetic witness, that namely of counseling government when our own personal interest is involved" (*ibid.*, p. 46). At least for the sake of emphasis it seems to me that we should rather distinguish another substantially different aspect of relevance to the political situation.

sulted in explosive situations, sometimes they were obviously misdirected, but the important fact is that a group of persons became seriously concerned about a deplorable social situation. Something was bound to happen.

There are many such areas of need—the suppressed races in our own and other countries (civil rights and social prejudice); the displaced persons not yet resettled in permanent homes (immigration and naturalization); migrant-labor families without permanent homes, schools, or churches; reservation Indian families steadily losing much of their land and stability; that large portion of the world's people that still go to sleep hungry (foreign aid); the untold misery and potential war orphans of tomorrow (international relations); etc.

I do not wish to suggest that all of these and similar problems must be or even can be met through governmental means. But it seems apparent that if we were sufficiently aroused about these situations, governmental means would be employed along with any others that might be available. Were we honestly concerned and involved—could we really see our neighbors as ourselves—some acceptable form of action would be found. Thus Burkholder appropriately suggests that "the Mennonite Church ask herself whether there may not be a thousand non-governmental ways open to spirit-filled Christians for the establishment of peace and righteousness."[35]

2. *Types of Relevance According to the Form of Expression.* Consideration of the various forms of expression that might be taken by a social or political concern will here be very brief. The attempt of this entire paper is rather to emphasize the fact that our need is not so much for keener rational insight into the possible consistency or inconsistency of certain forms of involvement as it is for a deeper participation in the compassion of Christ. Our sleepless nights should rather be spent in deep compassion for the destitute and mistreated than in preoccupation about our own legalistic purity. To me it seems virtually impossible to say definitely at what point these various forms of involvement will become impossible for a totally committed follower of Christ with keen Christian conscience.

The following classification is only suggestive since there is perhaps no limit to the variety of forms an expression of concern might take. At least three forms of relevance to the political situation are clearly set forth in the New Testament.

(*a*) *Prayer.* "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; For Kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and

35 Burkholder, *op. cit.*, 722.

peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2:1, 2). A serious prayer-life about social ills would in itself inevitably lead to further actions.

(*b*) *Obedience.* "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme, Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (I Peter 2:13, 14; also 2:17 and Rom. 13). Such respectful obedience is important for the stability of political government.

(*c*) *Nonparticipation and Disobedience.* The above injunction to obedience is nevertheless understood by the disciples as definitely qualified by our primary obedience to Christ. Thus we have the complementary responsibility to refrain from obedience when there is immediate conflict with the Gospel (Acts 5:29). Refusal to participate in evil situations, e.g., military service, civil defense, swearing of oaths, situations of social injustice, may in itself serve as a powerful enunciation of moral and spiritual convictions.

A whole series of possible forms of action are concerned with influencing the course of political policy and specific decisions.

(d) Influencing Political Policy by education, argument, and persuasion through mass meetings, newspaper articles, letters and visits to officials, congressional testimony, etc. Perhaps this should be further subdivided to differentiate those general efforts designed to produce a favorable political climate (e.g., on racial integration) from those more specific efforts to determine the outcome of an immediate political decision. The latter necessarily involves more of the political ambiguities—the desirability of co-operating with other groups whose general interest may differ, the acceptability of compromise measures, etc. An obvious further consideration is the nature of the governmental function involved in the specific question; e.g., whether social reform or defense department policy.

(*e*) *Voting,* either for candidates to office or on specific issues (referendum). Certain of our groups have hesitated to exercise the franchise because they have construed a vote for an official as involving some kind of moral responsibility for his acts in office, whereas in political theory voting is often viewed as simply a part of the discussion process in which opinions are expressed and formulated.

(*f*) *Nonviolent Direct Action,* such as strikes, boycotts, etc. Such action has sometimes appealed to pacifists as an alternative to the use of police and military force; however, the strongly coercive element involved (e.g., economic) often seriously endangers the chances of reconciliation with the party against whom the action is taken. Nev-

ertheless, the story of Jesus and the money changers in the temple would suggest that there may be appropriate occasions for even such actions involving direct penalties.

(*g*) *Political Office.* Here the situation changes from seeking to influence public policy from outside the government to assuming personal responsibility for certain governmental functions. If the office carries responsibility for establishing policy it will also involve the difficulty of reconciling the interests of the various groups represented with the official's own Christian convictions. Treatment of this vast scope of possibilities in political office—from local to international levels, and from legislative to administrative and judicial functions—is beyond the limits of this paper. The earlier considerations should remind us, however, that our unconditional loyalty is to Christ, that this will result in inevitable conflict with the "world," and that our acceptance of and continuation in public office must therefore involve an element of contingency. Within this perspective, I am suggesting that all of the types of expression considered may at some time or other be employed by the Christian with keen social conscience.[36]

(*h*) *Symbolic Action Projects.* As suggested earlier, there are many forms of Christian action which are themselves not governmental but nevertheless relevant to the political situation. Most of the projects currently carried on by the MCC are of this nature. Certainly the relief projects have some relevance to international relations—a kind of prophetic testimony in themselves, symbolizing our Christian faith. Even the nature of our own Mennonite communities and churches takes on political importance in this light. In this sense also we might view the recent installation of a Negro pastor at the Woodlawn congregation as at least symbolically relevant to a grave political situation in our country today. In fact, our attempts to work at social problems through government may often appear as tinkling cymbals unless our own households of faith have evidenced genuine Christian concern.

3. *Self-Evaluation.* Bearing in mind the two general considerations regarding a specific political situation—whether we have any motivation to act, and what form the expression of concern might appropriately take—it appears that the first of these has been dominant when our own interests were involved, and the second when the interests of others were at stake. Thus when faced by questions of conscientious objection or UMT, we have given first consideration

36 For the general Mennonite attitude toward these types of action, see "Present Trends and Activities Among Mennonites in Their Approach to the State," paper prepared for Bluffton Conference of Brethren, Friends, and Mennonites, July 15-18, 1954.

to the question of motivation and purpose. Convinced that it was in our own interests to take action—that serious personal consequences were involved—we have usually found some appropriate forms of action. When, on the other hand questions concerning primarily other groups have arisen, e.g., foreign aid, civil rights, etc., we have seldom been seriously enough involved to have strong motivations to act. And when reminded by others or by our own pangs of conscience, we have emphasized the formal criterion—insisting that such governmental involvement is not appropriate for us as Christians.[37] A similar kind of self-deception seems to be involved in our complete preoccupation in other areas of culture, especially economic life, while disavowing participation in the political situation.

To repeat once more, *the simple point of this paper is the conviction that when we are thoroughly motivated by the love of the Christ of the cross—when we all actually take our neighbors' interests as seriously as our own—our concerns will appropriately find expression in actions that do have political relevance.* To what extent these actions will be governmental, I am uncertain, but we will be bound to explore fully all possibilities. Lawrence Burkholder emphasizes a similar point in retrospect:

> Knowing what we know now about a million Jews being exterminated like animals, about the jelly-bombing of German cities, literally roasting alive thousands of women and children, and about the agonies of soldiers on the battlefield, would any effort of the church to prevent World War II have seemed impractical or foolish?[38]

If the eyes of our people are increasingly fixed on the prevalent values of our culture—in the material luxury of our modern homes, finned cars, proper clothes, and immense video screens; in the physical preoccupation with sexual attraction, extravagant food and drink, and indulgent comfort; in the psychological egoism of vain pride, social power and prestige—we will participate in all levels of governmental life; but having left the guiding torch of Christian faith behind, we will do so without any distinct Christian witness.

If on the other hand our eyes are sentimentally fixed on ourselves and our traditional Mennonite institutions and prosperous communities—if we are intent on preserving our ethnic continuity and solidarity for another century—we will seek to avoid involvement in the frustrating, uncomfortable, and contaminating affairs of this "world"; but the torch of our Christian faith will be taken from us and given to those from all nations and races who are willing to go

37 See Edgar Metzler, "Mennonite Witness to the State, Attitudes and Actions, World War I—1956," paper presented at Laurelville Conference, Sept. 21-22, 1956.

38 Burkholder, *op. cit.*, 772.

with Christ among the publicans and Samaritans and even to the money changers on the hostile grounds of the Jewish temple.[39]

But if it be possible, through the grace of God, that our eyes can again be more steadily fixed on the unflinching but compassionate eyes of our Master and see through them the shepherdless people of this world—their sickness and their hunger, their homelessness and despair, their wounds inflicted by prejudice and war, and even their rebellion and hate—the healing oil of Christian love will again flow freely and our flickering torches be restored. And as we go in and out of difficult situations—in and out of political affairs—it will be with a deep conviction of that destiny to which we are called. And the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ (Rev. 11:15; cf. Matt. 6:10).

39 See Paul Peachey's penetrating article on "The Modern Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision," *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, p. 340. "If your study of the Anabaptist vision can serve as a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ, if the Anabaptist heritage can decrease that Christ may increase, Harold S. Bender's noble labor of love can mean much for troubled men in a troubled world. If instead we transform the vision into a traditional culture value we shall all go down with the other Pharisaisms of history."

Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874. By Gustav E. Reimer and G. R. Gaeddert. Newton: Mennonite Publication Office, 1956. Pp. x, 205. $2.75.

In an article in *The Mennonite Encyclopedia,* G. R. Gaeddert, co-author of *Exiled by the Czar,* says of Cornelius Jansen (1822-94): "Through his deep convictions he became the Moses who led his people from Prussia and Russia to the 'promised land' and inaugurated a migration movement to North America in magnitude far beyond his anticipation."

Cornelius Jansen was born in West Prussia in 1822, married Helena von Riesen in 1848, and moved with his family to Berdyansk on the Sea of Azov in 1850. In 1852 they moved back to West Prussia, and in 1856 returned to Berdyansk again. When the Russian government announced universal military service in 1870 Jansen became active in the emigration movement, for which offense the Russian government expelled him from the country in 1873. The family left Russia, first visiting friends and relatives in Germany, then Quakers in England, finally arriving at Berlin (Kitchener), Ontario, on August 13, 1873. After spending some time finding suitable locations for Mennonite settlements the family moved to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, in 1874 and then to their permanent home near Beatrice, Nebraska, in 1876.

It was his "deep conviction," supported by his family, together with his native ability which made Jansen a Moses in more than one respect. His father-in-law, Peter von Riesen, although well-to-do, stressed simple ways of living and basic Mennonite principles, for the encouragement of which he published Menno Simons' *Fundamentbuch* in a new edition of 3,000 copies for distribution among the Mennonites of West Prussia and Russia, only to have the West Prussian Mennonite Conference forbid their sale, confiscate most of the available copies, and write letters to the congregations of South Russia, influencing the termination of their sale there. This amazing rejection of the basic writing of the founder of the denomination was due in part to the church's fear of the growing hostility of the Prussian state, but more basically perhaps, to the declining vitality of the church itself which was responsible for its faint-heartedness.

When Cornelius Jansen married Helena von Riesen eight months after her father's death he seems to have inherited Peter von Riesen's spiritual mantle. In Russia he was helped to even deeper spiritual life by the influence of the pietist preacher Eduard Wüst. While remaining loyal to traditional Mennonite beliefs, his conviction that the Mennonite Church must be more aggressively evangelistic was deepened. He purchased and distributed Bibles and other Christian literature in many languages for evangelization of the people of South Russia and the cosmopolitan seaport of Berdyansk. Other Protestants as well as Mennonites assisted him in this well-organized work. Jansen also served as an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

When itinerant Quaker preachers came to South Russia it was Cornelius Jansen who assisted them in their labors and introduced them to his fellow Mennonites. When he later received a letter from the Quaker Isaac Robson in England encouraging him to further his evangelistic efforts, the Russian authorities prevented him from printing the letter for distribution among his people. "This refusal," says Jansen, "awakened in me and several others real suspicion, and gave the first serious thoughts concerning our real position under the Russian government, as to how

little our so-called religious liberty was worth" (p. 37). This, no doubt, was an important turning point in Jansen's life.

Jansen was a man of influence, a prosperous grain merchant, and a man of culture with an excellent library. For a time he was in the service of the Prussian consulate in Berdyansk, which gave him exceptional status in his community. None of this, however, was permitted to weaken his devotion to his faith and to his church, but rather the opposite. When some of his brethren complained of restrictions of privileges, he suggested that they should be more concerned to pray for forgiveness for having acquiesced to the demands of the state for providing transportation service for troops in the Crimean War.

When conscription was announced in 1870 Jansen was among the first to sense the real nature and the seriousness of the threat. During the next three years he was untiring in his efforts to convince his fellow Mennonites that for the sake of religious freedom, including the practice of nonresistance and freedom to witness to the faith, they should emigrate. Correspondence with Mennonites, government officials, and transportation agencies in North America, delegations to Odessa, St. Petersburg, and West Prussia, meetings with his fellow Mennonites, and the sending of the delegation of twelve men, including his close friend, minister Leonhard Sudermann, to North America in 1873, were his life and work until that memorable day, March 27, 1873, when a uniformed Russian official presented him with a ukase ordering him to leave the country never to return. Perhaps his keen sense of what might come was responsible from the first for his failure to become a Russian citizen. Had he done so he might have been sent to Siberia from whence escape would have been difficult.

Having arrived in Ontario, Jansen's tireless activity continued unabated on American soil. He conferred with members of the delegation of twelve who were here at the time, he visited and corresponded with Mennonite leaders in all parts of America, as well as with President Grant and other government officials, railroad companies and other agencies. Settling at Beatrice, Nebraska, the same principles which motivated his life in Russia continued to do so in his new home and were perpetuated by other members of the family.

Cornelius Jansen's oldest son, Peter Jansen, 21 years of age upon arrival in America, received valuable training from his father in those pioneer days. He too served as representative of railway companies, became one of the first large-scale sheep-growers in Nebraska, and in 1886 founded the town of Jansen, in which in accordance with the temperance convictions of the Jansen family the sale of intoxicating beverages was forbidden. At various times Peter Jansen served as justice of the peace, delegate to the national Republican convention, member of the Nebraska state legislature, United States commissioner to the Paris Exposition, and in other positions. He declined, however to run for governor when urged to do so, because of "my pronounced opposition to war and all that is military."

Exiled by the Czar is an important contribution to Mennonite history. The book is the fruit of extensive research by a number of persons, including, besides the authors, Ernst Correll and Georg Leibbrandt. It contains eight pages of helpful illustrations, seven appendixes, including two of Jansen's pronouncements on nonresistance and a translation of the official ukase expelling Jansen from Russia. The frontispiece is a photostatic copy of the original ukase including Jansen's photograph, 12 copies of which "were sent by Imperial command to the inspections of the bound-

aries, where they were hung up among criminals to whom access to the Russian empire was prohibited" (p. 73).

As is often the case there are minor points about the book which the reviewer wishes were different. The most serious, hardly a minor matter, is the absence of an index. The name of Jacob Y. Shantz is not spelled as he was accustomed to spelling it. In some instances the beginnings of chapters do not give adequate chronological orientation. For instance, Chapter I tells of Jansen's background and youth, with date of marriage and birth of the first child, but without giving the date of Jansen's birth. Only by going to the last page of the text and subtracting 72 years from 1894, the date of his death, does one discover that Jansen was born in 1822. The opening statement of Chapter III records the Jansens' silver wedding on May 4, but not until 8 pages later is the year 1873 mentioned in connection with the events of the chapter. The text of the narrative is replete with Germanisms which could have been eliminated with more careful editing. Last, may I say that this reviewer has a strong dislike for the practice of placing useful footnotes in a hidden portion of the book, rendering them impractical backnotes. These minor matters, however, do not cancel the statement that this is an important contribution to Mennonite history.

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Proceedings of the Eleventh Conference on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems. Published under the auspices of the Council of Mennonite and Affiliated Colleges. Available from the Committee on Planning and Arrangements, J. Winfield Fretz, secretary, North Newton, Kansas. North Newton, 1957. Pp. 143. $1.50.

In the April 1950 *MQR* Carl Kreider reviewed the *Proceedings* of the first seven conferences on Mennonite Cultural Problems. His article gave a brief history of the conference in August 1942 through its seventh meeting at Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas, in 1949. The article also listed the significant papers read at these conferences. Additional background material can be found in *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* under "Conference on Mennonite Cultural Problems" and "Council of Mennonite and Affiliated Colleges."

The *Proceedings* of the eighth conference, held at Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania, in June 1951, contains fourteen papers presented by Mennonite educators, a doctor, and a missionary. Below are listed the papers of this conference:

"Visual Aid in Higher Education," Lloyd L. Ramseyer; "An Effective Religious Program for Our Colleges," Paul Erb; "The Development of Mennonite Education," M. S. Harder; "Voluntary Service in Teacher Education," Mary Royer; "Our Colleges and the Voluntary Service Program in the Present Crisis," Elmer Ediger; "The Mennonite Way of Life on the Foreign Mission Field," John Wiebe; "The Mennonite Witness in the Southern Highlands," John R. Mumaw; "Religious and Cultural Beliefs and Practices of the Brethren in Christ," John H. Engle; "Evidences of Cultural Change Among the Amish," John A. Hostetler; "Creative Writing in Mennonite Schools and Colleges," Naomi Brenneman; "Creative Art in Mennonite Schools and Colleges," Mrs. Esther Groves; "Creative Music in Mennonite Schools and Colleges," J. Mark Stauffer; "A Psychiatrist's Evaluation of The Principle of Christian Simplicity," Norman Loux; and "Sociological Aspects of Divorce Among Mennonites," J. W. Fretz.

The ninth conference was held at Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas, in June 1953. The *Proceedings* contain the following twelve conference addresses:

"An Evaluation of the Cultural Conference After Ten Years," J. Winfield Fretz; "How Can Mennonite Educational Institutions Combat the Disintegrating Forces Which Threaten Family Life?" Russell L. Mast; "Types of Extra-Curricular Activities and Their Values," Walter Oswald; "The Problem of Integrating Extra-Curricular Activities," Eldon W. Graber; "Problem of Correlating Extra-Curricular Activities With Curriculum," Karl Massanari; "Outside Influences on Mennonite Thought," Harold S. Bender; "An Evaluation of Mennonite Social Welfare Institutions," Andrew R. Shelly; "Social Work As a Christian Profession," Carl F. Smucker; "An Analysis of the Social Distance Reactions of Students From the Three Major American Mennonite Groups," L. Roy Just; "Profile of a Mennonite Community—A Survey of Moundridge, Kansas," J. Lloyd Spaulding; "Mennonite Attitudes Toward Wealth—Past and Present," Melvin Gingerich; and "A Critique of Mennonites at Mid-Century," Don. E. Smucker. A special feature of this issue is its twelve page cumulative index covering the first nine volumes (1942-53).

In 1955 the conference met at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago. For its program the committee "tried consciously to center attention on the problems confronting Mennonites in urban cultures" because up to that date comparatively little attention had been paid "to the impact that the urban way of life has had on Mennonites." Among the papers read at the conference, the following nine are published in the *Proceedings of the Tenth Conference. . . . :*

"Social Science Textbooks In Mennonite Colleges," Guy F. Hershberger; "How Will Population Trends Affect Our Mennonite Colleges in the Future?" Paul Bender; "Mennonite College Population Trends—The General Conference Outlook," Eldon W. Graber; "How Will Population Trends Affect Our Mennonite Colleges in the Future?" S. L. Loewen; "The I-W Program A Present Day Urban Witness," Henry Weaver, Jr.; "Evangelizing the Urban Industrial Worker," Leland Harder; "The Dutch Mennonites and Urbanism," Cornelius Krahn; "Early Anabaptists and Urbanism," Paul Peachey; and "The Journal of a Mennonite in Urban Industry," Curtis Janzen.

The most recent *Proceedings,* number eleven, presents the following eleven papers read at the conference held at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, June 6-7, 1957:

"The Christian View of Man," Harold Gross; "The Christian View of the Fine Arts," Mary Oyer; "The Christian View in Political Science," Robert Kreider; "Nontheological Cultural Factors in the Origin and Current Relationship of Mennonite Groups," Ed. G. Kaufman; "Art Among the Early Dutch Mennonites," Cornelius Krahn; "The Music of the 16th Century Anabaptists," Rosella Duerksen; "Spenser's View of the Anabaptists," Wesley Prieb; "The Changing Economic Base of the Mennonite Community With Special Reference to Certain Kansas Counties," J. Lloyd Spaulding; "Patterns of Cultural Assimilation Among Mennonites," Calvin Redekop; "Tradition and Change in Mennonite Family Life," Howard Kauffman; and "Social Trends Affecting the Mennonite Family at Mid-Century," J. Winfield Fretz.

The writer of the Foreword correctly states that "In the aggregate, the papers represent a substantial addition to the growing body of scholarly literature now available on contemporary Mennonite life, and

thought." Among the eleven writers, eight now hold the doctor's degree, and the remaining three are taking advanced work beyond the master's degree. Although not all of these papers are heavily footnoted, several of them come out of the research on doctors' dissertations, while the others too are worthy of publication in learned journals. In this volume there is additional proof that Mennonite scholarship is sound and mature.

The papers of this conference can be divided into two classes. One set examines the present scene and wrestles with current theological, educational and sociological problems. In this list fall the addresses by Gross, Oyer, Kreider, Spaulding, Redekop, Kauffman, and Fretz. The other set presents historical background material necessary for the understanding of current problems. Under this category are the papers of Kaufman, Krahn, Duerksen, and Prieb.

It is perhaps fair to say that the entire volume shows these authors to be deeply aware of the fact that the Mennonite Church is going through a period of fairly rapid transition when old values are being threatened. Serious dedicated scholars and educators in this brotherhood are therefore raising the questions which must be answered if the church is to be saved from secularization. These problems are not unique to Mennonitism and consequently many theological libraries can profitably add this set of studies to their collections. All are available from secretary Fretz at $1.50 per volume, with the exception of the 1942 and 1944 issues, which are out of print.

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